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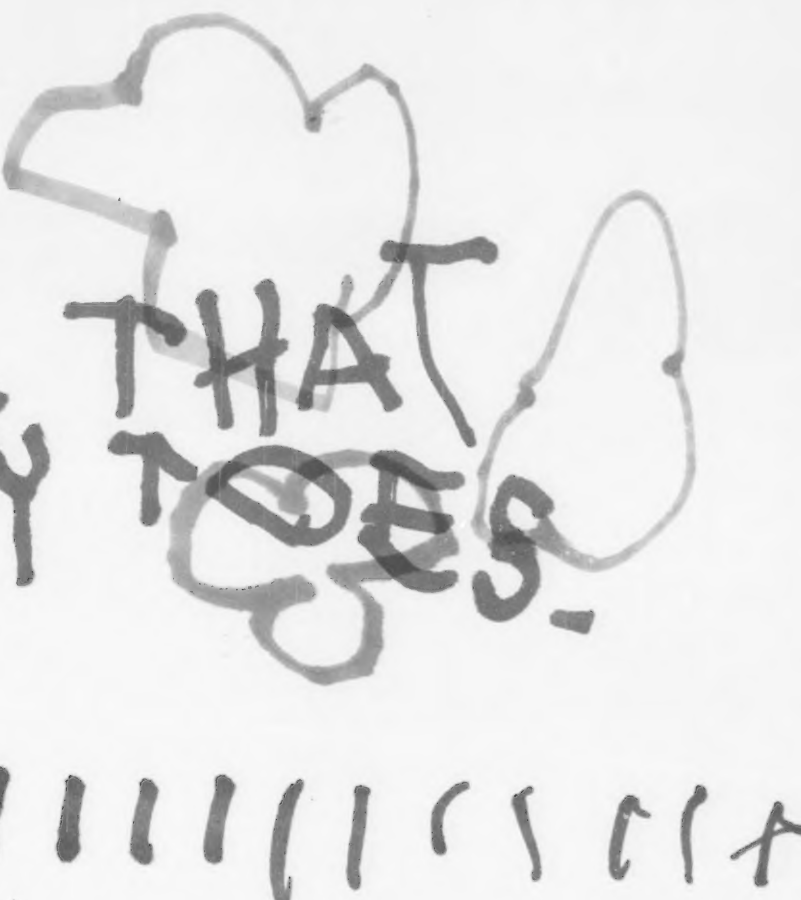
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CHRONICLE

Killers confess — so does Chron

San Francisco Chronicle reporter Susan Sward was sitting at her desk one morning last August when the telephone rang. "Do you want to know something about some murders in the Washington area?" a male caller asked. Three months before, Sward had gone to Seattle to prepare a story about the "Green River killings," a notorious string of slayings that had baffled authorities for two years. Police had identified twenty-six victims, most of them young prostitutes.

Sward's caller, Richard Carbone, was in San Francisco County jail awaiting sentencing after having been convicted of rape and robbery. A respected veteran reporter who has been at the *Chronicle* for five years, Sward was skeptical but told her editors that she had better check out the story.

For three hours, Carbone, thirty, and Robert Matthias, a twenty-six-year-old ex-convict awaiting trial on charges of robbery and burglary, told Sward a haunting tale of how they had met several years earlier while in San Quentin prison and lived together as drifters after they were released. Their travels, they said, had brought them to the Portland and Seattle area, where they claimed to have killed, individually and together, at

least sixteen women, mostly during the summer of 1983.

Matthias, steely-eyed and covered with tattoos, described his victims as "the type of people I hated the most." He told Sward he suspected that his mother had worked as a prostitute when he was young. Carbone, frizzy-haired and articulate, claimed to have helped Matthias with eleven killings and described turning up the car radio to drown out the dying screams of one victim.

Sward's account of the confessions, which ran on the *Chronicle's* front page on Tuesday, August 7, made for suspenseful reading. Unfortunately, almost none of it was true. The next day, a detective from the forty-one-member Green River task force organized by Washington's King County police department interviewed Carbone and Matthias and their confession quickly crumbled. By the end of the week, Matthias admitted that he and Carbone had been planning the hoax for some time, researching various crimes they might confess to as part of an escape plan. According to Matthias, the two hoped to break free after being transferred to a mental institution or while leading police to the bodies of their alleged victims. For two weeks

before the *Chronicle* bit, King County police say, Carbone and Matthias had been calling around the Seattle area trying to interest other reporters in their confession.

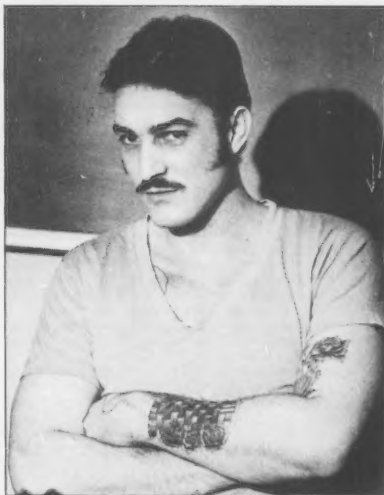
How did the *Chronicle* come to swallow the bait? Sward says that after she received Carbone's phone call she was unable to contact either the detectives who had worked on his latest crimes or her contacts on the Green River task force. Around 5 P.M. Monday, however, seven hours after she had received the phone call from Carbone, three pieces of information convinced Sward and city editor Alan Mutter to run the story. During their interview, Carbone had told Sward that a detective from the task force was coming to San Francisco the next day to interview him and Matthias. According to Sward, an investigator from the task force had told her that a detective was indeed coming to interview the two, but could provide no further details. In addition, Sward says that San Francisco police led her to believe that she was on the right track; furthermore, she was able to partially confirm an obscure fact mentioned by Matthias during their interview. (He had told Sward that his mother had lived in rural Mendocino County with Kenneth Parnell sometime before Parnell was arrested in a celebrated kidnapping case in 1972. Unable to find Matthias's mother, Sward called the prosecutor in the Parnell case, who confirmed that a woman named Matthias did indeed have a son and had lived with Parnell.) "If that had been false, that would have stopped the story right there," Sward says.

As it was, the early editions of the *Chronicle* hit the streets at about 9 P.M. on Monday night. The story was picked up quickly by the wire services, sending a jolt into newsrooms up and down the west coast. That night, Mike Barber, a police reporter at the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, which along with the competing *Seattle Times* had been living with the story since the first body was discovered near the Green River in July 1982, flew to San Francisco to follow up on the story.


But Carlton Smith, who covers the story for the *Times*, had been called by Carbone and Matthias two weeks before. Although they had improved their story since then, Smith was still not convinced. The next day, he called San Quentin and discovered that Carbone and Matthias had never served time together. Fae Brooks, spokeswoman for the Green River task force, says that she had also become aware of Carbone and Matthias's "confession" two weeks earlier and, if asked, would have given Sward "some facts . . . and told her we were skeptical."

Sward says she is sorry that Brooks didn't

Con men: When prisoners Richard Carbone (left) and Robert Matthias confessed sixteen murders to a San Francisco Chronicle reporter, the paper thought it had a scoop.



both: Steve Ringman/San Francisco Chronicle



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CHRONICLE

return her call but is "proud of the story" nonetheless. She said she is particularly pleased that the *Chronicle* was among the first papers to report that Seattle detectives considered the confessions a hoax.

For his part, city editor Mutter wishes "we had [had] six more hours." He never considered holding the piece once Sward had "confirmation" from Seattle, he says, be-

cause he figured that Carbone must have called other papers too, and there was no time to lose. "We did the best we could with the information we had," Mutter says. "That's the best you can ask of any newspaper."

Steve Simurda

Steve Simurda is a reporter for the *Associated Press* in San Francisco.

Turning the tables in Delaware

When must an individual's right to privacy yield to the public's right to know? This familiar subject of newsroom debate presented itself in a novel form this summer at the News-Journal Newspapers in Wilmington, Delaware, when a reporter clashed with her editors over whether her arrest record should have been disclosed by the papers' ombudsman.

Last June, Cecilia Friend, a court reporter for the Gannett-owned newspapers, wrote a dispassionate front-page article in the *Sunday News Journal* describing how Edward "Moose" Morehead, the former head of a local pipe-fitters' union, had three times been arrested for driving under the influence, the last time after he had passed out behind the wheel of his car in a tavern parking lot. Friend's story went on to note that on all three occasions Morehead's attorneys had gotten the charges reduced with the apparent cooperation of the Delaware attorney general's office. It seemed, Friend pointed out in the third paragraph of the story, that Morehead's union had contributed to the attorney general's election campaign and that there were other connections between Morehead and the attorney general's office.

After the article appeared, Attorney General Charles M. Oberly III denied that Morehead had received favorable treatment from his office and complained that the story was unfair. Public editor Harry F. Thernal, formerly managing editor of *The Morning News*, agreed to look into the matter.

Thernal finished his investigation in early July and provided a draft of his column to Friend and her editor on the Morehead story, city editor John Sweeney. In its detailed examination of the story, the column seemed to confirm several of the attorney general's criticisms, but nevertheless concluded that the article was a legitimate news story and that the *Sunday News Journal* was not guilty of prejudicial coverage. In fact, Thernal wrote, the article "may have been overedited and the story's faults may be the editor's rather than the reporter's."

But it was the last in a series of "points

at issue" in the column that upset Cecilia Friend and sent her scampering for an attorney. Thernal noted that the attorney general had "questioned the motivation of the reporter in writing the story . . . [raising] the possibility that [Friend] was biased because she had herself once been convicted of driving under the influence and that she had once had a run-in with the chief deputy attorney general." Friend's attorney wrote a letter to Thernal asserting that publication of his column would damage Friend's personal and professional reputation and that the paper was "on actual notice" of certain errors the column contained. (For example, Friend was not "convicted," having chosen instead to enroll in a first-offender's program.) "It is obvious," the letter continued, "that your story contains errors and omissions which should be corrected before it is published."

Although Thernal agreed to some changes at the insistence of Friend and Sweeney, the final version of the column, which ran on July 8, included the mention of Friend's arrest. "I was very upset," Friend recalls. "And I've been depressed over it for a while."

When she came to work the next day, there was more to be depressed about. Editor J. Donald Brandt had posted a memo on the newsroom bulletin board explaining that it had been necessary to include Friend's past arrest because "I reasoned that the public credibility of these newspapers would be compromised if we failed to reveal that [fact] at the outset. . . . I understood that the decision would be unpopular to many of you and outrageous to Cecilia Friend . . . and I was prepared to accept whatever scorn and derision it precipitated among you." Brandt concluded the memo with his own scorn for Friend's efforts, through her attorney, to challenge the story. "I want all of you to know," he wrote, "that I find an effort to impose prior restraint on the content of these papers reprehensible when it is made on behalf of a member of the staff as I do when it is attempted by any public official."

Was the mention of Friend's arrest nec-

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CHRONICLE

essary? Neither Brandt in his memo, nor Thernal in his column, ever explained just how the arrest could have affected Friend's impartiality in writing the Morehead story. Most reporters at the paper were sympathetic to Friend but believed she erred in threatening legal action. "I don't think it was very smart," says Merritt Wallick, a business writer. "There are too many negative feelings among journalists about libel and prior restraint."

"I don't think I have much of a future here," says Friend, who worked her way up from a news clerk over the past seven years. What particularly galls her, she says, is that Thernal and other editors were aware of her arrest when the story had originally been assigned. "And Harry [Thernal] at that time said, 'Don't worry about it,' [that] there was no conflict and to go ahead and write the story." (Thernal has declined to comment on this point.) Friend says she was very surprised that Brandt had regarded her lawyer's warning as an attempt to exercise prior restraint. "I was trying to get the editors to know how seriously I felt about what they were going to do."

Rob Levin

Rob Levin is a reporter for The Atlanta Journal and Constitution.



Carlos Carrion/Sygma

Santiago spring? Although Chilean police still assault protesters — and journalists — at antigovernment rallies, reporters say many press restrictions have been eased.

Fighting back in Chile

One evening last March, Jorge Lavandero, the publisher of *Fortín Mapocho*, a new twice-weekly tabloid in Chile, stepped out of his car after a minor traffic accident and was set upon by a dozen thugs who beat him unconscious. A former Christian Democratic senator, Lavandero had been driving to the

home of his editor to deliver documents relating to an upcoming exposé — an account of a questionable real estate deal involving President Augusto Pinochet. After the beating, says Lavandero, who now walks with a cane and has lost the hearing in one ear, the documents disappeared. *continued*



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Despite this chilling incident, the tradition of critical journalism that was crushed after the 1973 military coup led by Pinochet has recently shown surprising resiliency. Although television, most radio, and the country's four daily newspapers still almost invariably support the Pinochet government, magazines such as the weekly *Hoy* and the fortnightly *Apsi*, *Cauce*, and *Andísis*, a few independent radio stations, and now Lavandero's *Fortín Mapocho* regularly expose official corruption, police abuses, and the country's grave economic ills. "People sometimes think that in a dictatorship you can't say anything," says Mary Zajer, managing editor of *Cauce*, an organ of the Social Democratic Party that recently reported a series of unscrupulous business deals by Pinochet and his family. "We have some maneuvering room now, and we've fought for every inch of it by writing and not being cowed. But that doesn't mean we have freedom of the press."

Following the 1973 coup, the government cracked down on opposition journalists by closing several newspapers and strictly controlling the remaining news media. Government censors were stationed in newsrooms and police officers sat next to radio announcers. In addition, several journalists were

among the hundreds of people who disappeared between 1974 and 1976. In the years since, press restrictions have been relaxed and the outbreak of mass antigovernment protests in May 1983 has emboldened independent journalists. "Now we can say a lot more, though not everything," says Guil-

'People sometimes think that in a dictatorship you can't say anything. We have some maneuvering room now.'

Mary Zajer,
managing editor of *Cauce*

lermo Muñoz, who is network news director and an announcer for Radio Cooperativa, the largest opposition radio network.

Patricia Verdugo, a reporter for *Hoy* whose father, a union official, disappeared and was found floating in the Mapocho River in 1976, says that she and her colleagues have recently begun to drop the standard euphemisms and refer, for example, to "torture" instead of

"illegitimate pressures," and to "political prisoners" instead of "violators of the state security law." "This language is very important," she says, "because when people were disappearing, no one dared say so and it kept happening."

Even the pro-Pinochet press has been asserting its independence, refusing, for example, to obey a 1983 decree banning mention of the antigovernment protests or use of the word *paro* ("national strike"). Last March the staunchly progovernment daily *El Mercurio*, which had strongly supported the 1973 coup, even published an interview with Jaime Insunza, a leading figure in the Chilean Communist Party. (Insunza was expelled from the country a few days later.)

The new atmosphere has prompted the government to take new legal measures to restrain the press. Last spring, the four-man junta passed an "abuse of publicity law" which was quickly signed by Pinochet. A sweeping libel law heavily weighted in favor of the plaintiff, the new measure was first invoked in July by Julio Ponce Lerou, Pinochet's son-in-law. Lerou sued Radio Cooperativa because the network had referred to him as a "principal shareholder" rather than a "contract employee" of a copper and gold mine.

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Another law stipulates that all new publications must secure government approval before publishing. *Fortín Mapocho* circumvented this by reviving the dormant permit of a long-defunct paper of the same name. A subsequent court challenge by the government failed to get the permit revoked.

Meanwhile, violence against journalists, as the Lavandero beating attests, is still a real threat and the government's emergency powers are still intact. Before the largest of the "peaceful protest" demonstrations against the government took place in Santiago in September, military authorities banned Radio Cooperativa and the Catholic Church-owned Radio Chilena from broadcasting news. Ten bystanders and demonstrators were killed by riot police at the rally. Afterwards, another military edict forbade *Apsi*, *Cauce*, *Análisis*, and *Fortín Mapocho* to publish photographs or drawings of the demonstration.

Nevertheless, says Jorge Donoso, editor of *Fortín Mapocho*, a return to the repression of the early 1970s is unlikely: "There is no support for that kind of brutality now, even within the armed forces."

Tim Frasca

Tim Frasca is a free-lance writer living in Santiago.



New York Times reporter Richard Severo

Times v. Severo (cont'd)

The battle between veteran *New York Times* reporter Richard Severo and the newspaper's powers-that-be is now in arbitration, and the unusual case has continued to raise questions about the *Times*'s handling of the dispute.

Severo says his troubles at the *Times* began in late 1981 when, while preparing two stories about a victim of neurofibromatosis (the "Elephant Man's disease") whom he called

"Lisa H.," he told *Times* management that he was thinking of expanding the stories into a book. Although an executive told him that he need only include the company's book-publishing subsidiary, *Times Books*, in the first round of bidding for the book, Severo says it later became apparent that his status at the *Times* would suffer if he signed a contract with an outside publisher (see "Loyalty

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Test at *The New York Times*?" CJR, July/August 1983).

Severo eventually signed a contract with Harper & Row, the highest bidder for the book, and in November 1982 he was transferred from the *Times*'s science section to the metropolitan desk, where he had started his career at the paper thirteen years earlier. While the *Times* vehemently denies that the transfer was related to Severo's book, Severo and The New York Newspaper Guild charge that it

was punitive and are demanding his reinstatement as a science writer.

At arbitration hearings last July, the *Times* startled friends and critics alike when its lawyers demanded that Severo produce "all date books . . . and other similar documents" back to January 1, 1980. Severo and the Guild protested that this would force the disclosure of a reporter's confidential sources, which the *Times* in the past has strenuously opposed. In August, after more than a dozen

Times staff members, including columnist Russell Baker and other prominent figures, wrote him to express concern, publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger issued a memo saying the demand would be withdrawn.

John Stanton, the *Times* lawyer who made the request, says that he aimed to cross-examine Severo on testimony he had given which alluded to the documents, and that the *Times* was willing all along to arrange for the exclusion of any confidential data. "The idea that we'd suddenly become anti-First Amendment because of a two-bit case, or for any other reason, is ludicrous," says *Times* executive editor A.M. Rosenthal. Columnist Anthony Lewis says he thinks the "question of consistency of position" between the initial demand and the paper's views on the First Amendment had not been thought through.

The *Times*'s actions had also raised eyebrows when, at the paper's request, arbitrator James Altieri barred two *Village Voice* reporters from a June hearing at which Rosenthal appeared. (Rosenthal explains that the *Times* was willing to open all its arbitrations to reporters, but not to play the "silly little game" of allowing only journalists friendly to Severo into a single hearing.)

Even if the Guild can prove that Severo's transfer was punitive, the case may ultimately turn on whether the *Times* can be ordered to reassign a reporter to a specific section of the paper and then to publish his articles. The *Times*'s attorneys say that both the paper's Guild contract and the First Amendment insure its freedom to assign reporters at its discretion — a freedom they say the paper plans to defend.

In a separate case in June, a federal appeals court refused to enforce a National Labor Relations Board order that the Passaic, New Jersey, *Herald-News* resume publishing a weekly column that had been killed, in the NLRB's judgment, in illegal retaliation for its author's support of a union drive at the paper. While directing the NLRB "to invoke any specific, alternate remedies," the court balked at an "express or implied command that the press publish what it prefers to withhold."

Nevertheless, there is some legal precedent for Severo's and the Guild's position. In 1973 the Supreme Court ruled that the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations had not violated the Constitution when it forbade a local paper to publish sex-segregated want ads. And in 1980 the NLRB ordered a Duluth, Minnesota, television station to resume a local newscast which the board found to have been canceled to punish the staff for its activity in a union drive.

Despite these decisions, attorney Floyd

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Abrams, who has represented the *Times* in several celebrated First Amendment cases, says: "I just don't think courts at the end of the day are going to require newspapers to print what they don't want to print." Jack Landau, executive director of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, says he thinks financial compensation, rather than an order telling a paper to print someone's work, would be the right remedy for even an illegally motivated discharge.

Meanwhile, arbitration hearings continue. "I know that I'm not going to walk away," Severo says, adding, "I really don't like bullies very much." *Times* general counsel Katharine Darrow says she can imagine the case being disposed of through a compromise "if Severo were willing to settle for something other than going back to science." And executive editor Rosenthal says Severo's future at the *Times* is "whatever he wishes to make of it. If he devotes himself to his work . . . he has a bright future."

Seth Kupferberg

Seth Kupferberg is a writer and a lawyer with the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union.

South Africa cracks down — in Namibia

For the past six years, the *Windhoek Observer*, a weekly tabloid published in the capital of Namibia in southwest Africa, has outraged some — and delighted others — by consistently defying the moral and political strictures observed by most publications in the South African-occupied territory. Now, it appears, authorities may finally succeed in reining in the *Observer*.

After banning eight issues earlier this year, South Africa's Directorate of Publications slapped a permanent ban on the paper, claiming it was a danger to public morals and state security. Three weeks later, the Publications Appeal Board lifted the ban. To forestall further sanctions the *Observer* agreed to deposit \$12,000 with the South African administration and decided to demote political editor Gwen Lister. The deposit, exacted under South African security laws, has never before been required of a Namibian paper and will presumably be forfeited if the paper is banned again.

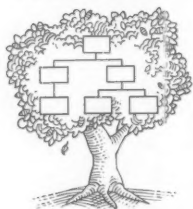
Until the most recent shakeup, Lister, editor Hannes Smith, and a part-time sports

writer, Dave Salmon, were the *Observer's* only reporting staff. Smith started the newspaper in 1978, when, as editor of the territory's largest daily, *The Windhoek Advertiser*, he was instructed by the paper's new owner to support a political party favored by the South African government. Smith refused, was fired, and one week later withdrew his family's savings from the bank to start his own newspaper. Lister, a political reporter on the *Advertiser*, joined him and, in addition to doing her own reporting, often typeset the tabloid's 30,000 words of copy, much of it dictated to her by Smith in a style one South African reporter calls "stream of consciousness journalism." The newspaper, an unconventional mix of crime, political commentary, investigative reporting, rumor, and racy pin-ups, soon grew to a circulation of over 8,000, becoming the largest-selling newspaper in the sparsely settled territory.

Both fifty-one-year-old Smith, who was born in Angola, and thirty-year-old Lister, a South African who has lived in Namibia for the past ten years, consider themselves Namibian patriots, and are vehemently critical of South Africa's role in Namibia. In defiance of a 1966 United Nations ruling ending their occupation of Namibia, the South Africans have stayed on, creating separate authorities for each of the country's various ethnic groups, and shaping these groupings into an organization called the Multi Party Conference. The South Africans say they intend to negotiate Namibian independence with the MPC, which both Lister and Smith oppose on the grounds that it divides the Namibian people, does not fairly represent the black majority, and has been responsible for widespread corruption.

To demonstrate the "malpractice" of South Africa's administration, Smith, a man of rampant energy given to hyperbole and apocalyptic turns of phrase, has waged a relentless crusade against corruption and hypocrisy. Deliberately flouting Namibia's strict laws governing decency, Smith took to adorning the back page of the *Observer* with pictures of bare-breasted women, while simultaneously revealing, often on the front page, the sexual transgressions of Windhoek's mostly Calvinist white community. Last summer a number of prominent members of that community were incensed after Smith reported that he had seen them entering the capital's only massage parlor (since closed). And a local minister's wife, who had attempted to sue the *Observer* for its display of nudity, found herself on the receiving end

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Lies they tell our children

"I don't have a future."

With tears streaming down her face, a 13-year-old girl made this bleak assessment to her father. To back up her pessimism, she had brought home from school a mimeographed sheet listing the horrors that awaited her generation in the next 25 years: Worldwide famine, overpopulation, air pollution so bad that everyone would wear a gas mask, befouled rivers and streams that would mandate cleansing tablets in drinking water... a greenhouse effect that would melt the polar ice caps and devastate U.S. coastal cities... a cancer epidemic brought on by damage to the ozone layer.

Moved by the girl's misery, her father, Herbert I. London of the Hudson Institute and New York University, wrote a book, *Why Are They Lying to Our Children?* The book documents how some of the myths of the 1960s and 1970s—and some much older than that—are being perpetuated and taught as gospel truth in some of our schools. And the book raises a question in our minds: Will the next generation have any better understanding of science and technology—both their merits and their problems—than our own?

Professor London's book is not a plea for unbridled technology. But it is a plea for balance. And school textbooks, he believes, are notoriously unbalanced. In dealing with environmental questions, for example, no textbook the professor could find made any mention of the following facts:

- Total automobile emissions of hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen oxide

in the U.S. are less than half what they were from 1957 to 1967.

- The amount of unhealthy sulfur dioxide in the air has been steadily declining since 1970.

- The bacteria level in the Hudson River declined by more than 30 percent between 1966 and 1980.

Textbooks, Professor London finds, mythologize nature as eternally benign until disturbed by man. It's a rare schoolbook that talks about volcanoes belching radiation into the air, floods that overwhelm river towns, and tornadoes that lift people into oblivion. Moreover, textbooks hardly mention the promise of a bright future already on the horizon—when average life expectancy may approach 90 years, when products derived from recombinant DNA research will eliminate most viral diseases, when we will enjoy greater leisure, and materials—especially plastics—will be better, stronger, and safer.

Professor London's conclusion—with which we heartily agree—is that we should help our children think for themselves and reach balanced conclusions. Let's look at their textbooks, not to censor them but to raise questions. Let's give them different points of view and help discuss them. That way we can educate a new generation of citizens who aren't scared by science, and who won't be swayed by old mythologies.

Our youngsters do have a future. We, and the schools, should help them look forward to it with hope, even as they prepare to deal with its problems.

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Dick Tracy's wrist radio used to belong strictly in the Funnies.

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The best ideas are the ideas that help people. ITT

CHRONICLE

of a series of printed comments by the editor accusing her of having too much sexual energy and her husband too little. The intervention of authorities ended the dispute, but, Smith says, not before he had accosted the minister's wife on the steps of her husband's church and offered his own services as a remedy for her husband's deficiencies.

The *Observer* is also engaged in a feud with the South African-appointed chief official of Namibia, Administrator-General Dr. Willem van Niekerk. Relations grew worse last June after the *Observer* reported that van Niekerk had used his status to secure the best accommodations at a local game preserve, ousting foreign visitors — including a former lord mayor of London — who had reserved them months earlier.

Smith's investigations often take him outside the capital. He regularly drives 500 miles north to the Angolan border, where South African forces are locked in an eighteen-year-old war against nationalist guerrillas of the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO). Risking the penalties of South Africa's military censorship, Smith regularly reports on the war and has exposed atrocities. Two years ago, after being convicted on a string of eleven charges under the Defense Act, he was fined \$1,000.

In addition to Smith's aggressive reporting, Lister's weekly commentary on the intricate, often confusing political maneuvers in the struggle over Namibia's future has annoyed South African authorities. While the authorities have lifted five of the eight individual banning orders against the *Observer*, for example, one of the issues that still cannot be circulated contains Lister's account of a peace conference in Lusaka, Zambia, last May. The talks, organized by Zambia with South African assistance, collapsed. Lister reported the failure in detail, as well as the existence of a broad alliance supporting SWAPO.

In May 1983, Lister was detained and searched for two hours at Johannesburg's Jan Smuts Airport after returning from Paris, where she had attended a United Nations conference on Namibia. Later charged with attempting to smuggle banned literature — including SWAPO's constitution — into the country, Lister was acquitted last May. Since then, police have raided her Windhoek home and she has received a number of death threats.

Lister's demotion provoked a storm of protest at the *Observer*. The nine other members of the business and editorial staffs resigned en masse and Smith has since been putting out the paper singlehandedly. Although Smith described the suspension of the column



both: Cynthia Foran

Squeeze play: When South African authorities pressured Namibian editor Hannes Smith (right) into suspending popular political columnist Gwen Lister, the rest of his staff quit in protest.

as "an interim measure," it does not appear that he and publisher Thurstan Salt, a local businessman who owns 51 percent of the paper, intend to back down. At the time of the ban, Salt told a South African reporter that "Gwen Lister would never write another line of politics in her life," and Lister herself believes that Smith, financially battered by the ban and with few friends in the local administration, has finally been backed into a corner. "There's just crime — no politics

at all," says Lister about the latest editions of the paper.

As for his plans for the future, Smith says, "As long as I am alive, there will still be an *Observer*."

Charles Ruffle and Miriam Lacob

Charles Ruffle is a free-lance writer living in Johannesburg; Miriam Lacob, a New York-based writer, edits the newsletter of the Committee to Protect Journalists.

Question:



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MCDONNELL DOUGLAS



COMMENT

The late great debate debate

The wholesale blackballing of reporters nominated to take part in the first of this year's presidential debates dramatized a central fact about organizing such events: the candidates run the show. In essence, Ronald Reagan and Walter Mondale decided what sort of debate they wanted, then permitted the League of Women Voters to sponsor it.

The October revelation — that the candidates had, by some accounts, rejected all but four of 112 names submitted by the League as potential panelists — raised questions about the role of journalists. One of them, simply put, is this: Is the presence of reporters on such occasions really required? In theory, they supply the knowledge and skills needed to force a candidate to face up to tough questions — or at least to give the audience a chance to see that the candidate is ducking, equivocating, or misstating the facts. So far, however, few panelists have risen above the scripted format, and too often their follow-up questions have failed to explore obvious openings.

Would it be better, then, to let the candidates square off at each other, without any journalistic intermediaries to get in the way? This has been tried in numerous congressional

and prenomination debates and the results have not been encouraging: the exchanges tended to degenerate into nit-picking and routine rhetoric.

Perhaps in the future there should be debates in both formats — with and without panelists. Meanwhile, one thing is clear: the League of Women Voters, or whoever else sponsors these now-indispensable events, must find a way to select reporters without deferring to the candidates. To suggest that only a panel picked by politicians will serve is insulting to the League (which is now trying to devise a better way of presenting the candidates with a slate of choices) and insulting to journalism as well. To be sure, reporters are already collaborators with politicians in the game of politics, caught in a symbiotic relationship from which it is extremely difficult to extricate themselves. But in the case of the debates the solution would seem to be simple enough. If the candidates balk and insist on the veto power that they have been granted since 1976 — it was not exercised then and only one journalist was blackballed in 1980 — then the news organizations should exercise their own veto power and decline to take part.

The VDT story: Why we stick with it

Even some of the *Review's* best friends are critical of us when it comes to the subject of video display terminals. They ask why it is that we seem bent on proving, in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that VDTs are unsafe. This is not our intention; rather, we have been troubled for years about indications that VDTs *may* cause health problems — and equally troubled by the fact that the press as a whole seems unwilling to report in any depth on the nagging questions about safety. While presently only about 50,000 newspaper employees use VDTs, the total number of users throughout the nation is estimated to be about 10 million. Thus, the VDT safety story, though it affects journalists, is a very broad one — the kind that one might expect major papers to take an interest in, at least occasionally. Yet what little coverage exists seems to be largely confined to “no-problem” stories or brief items about clusters of miscarriages or birth defects among women VDT users. Meanwhile, stories that deal with the possible dangers posed by low-level radiation almost invariably fail to mention VDTs.

So long as the major news media continue to practice a policy of benign neglect in regard to this story, we feel obliged to do what we can to fill the information gap. It is

to that end that we invited Louis Slesin, editor of *Microwave News*, a newsletter that has taken no sides on the VDT story while keeping up with all relevant developments, to explain what is and what is not known about VDT radiation. A second article describes the extensive lobbying effort by the makers of VDTs — with a powerful assist from the American Newspaper Publishers Association — to counteract fears which industry regards as irrational and to defeat legislation inspired, in part, by those fears. It seems to us that there's a story here, even though it's not the kind of news the papers regard as fit to print.

Darts and laurels

Dart: to the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, for sitting since August on a solidly documented story by reporter Joelle Cohen revealing that Ronald Reagan in 1941 not only had signed a deed for two real estate lots that carried a racially restrictive clause, but also — and more remarkably — had entered into an agreement that extended the covenant to six other lots on adjacent land, thereby insuring total protection from non-Caucasian occupants (except for servants, of

course). For contrast, consider the *Herald Examiner's* page-one bannered reprint (Sunday, September 16) of a curious *Wall Street Journal* op-ed piece by Jonathan Kwitny and Anthony M. De Stefano that tried mightily — but unsuccessfully — to document ties between Geraldine Ferraro and the Mafia underworld. (Incidentally, although many California news media, including the *Los Angeles Times*, had been tipped in mid-August to the Reagan real estate item by a local title searcher, it was not until October 5 that the story saw the light of day, when it was broken by UPI.)

Dart: to the *New York Post*, for the outrageously irresponsible (even for the *Post*) headline on its September 4 front page: COP SHOTS 4 AT JESSE RALLY. Readers who turned to the story inside learned that an off-duty policeman from out of town had gone berserk during an argument with a street vendor at a West Indian Day parade in Brooklyn — an event at which Jesse Jackson had spoken on behalf of voter registration (and of Walter Mondale) several hours before.

Laurel: to the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* and reporter John F. Hagan, for a series of articles (April, May) delving into the dubious business dealings of Arnold R. Pinkney, prominent civic leader, former manager of the Jesse Jackson presidential campaign, and chairman of a local insurance company, who, among other things, sold a \$2 million policy to the Cleveland Port Authority, of which he is secretary; other dealings involved the negotiation of a lease on a Port Authority warehouse that was alleged to be highly favorable to Pinkney's business partner and that subsequently brought the insurance agency \$21 million in coverage for the building and its tenants. Prompted by the paper's probe, the Cuyahoga County prosecutor's office launched an investigation of its own and on September 14 the paper reported that Pinkney had been indicted on four counts (two of them felonies) of having an unlawful interest in a public contract.

Dart: to WRDW-TV, the CBS affiliate in North Augusta, South Carolina, for racing to report, in its 10 P.M. news brief on August 19, unconfirmed allegations that an inmate — subsequently identified as black — had been beaten to death in Burke County jail. By its 11 P.M. newscast, the station was able to tell its viewers that beating had been ruled out as a cause of death by local officials (including the county commissioner, who happens to be black) — but not before the original, erroneous report had helped to trigger outbreaks of burning, looting, and rock-throwing by outraged blacks that led to a curfew and arrests. (Ultimately, a coroner's inquest revealed that the prisoner's death had been due to heat exhaustion.)

Dart: to the *Daily Californian*, the student newspaper of the University of California, Berkeley, for a dispiriting piece in its orientation issue advising underage freshmen how to get liquor by using a fake I.D.

Dart: to the *Tulsa World* and reporter Ken Jackson, for flunking an elementary journalism test. Jackson's enthusiastic feature on the projected expansion of the University of Tulsa's courses in continuing education described the program as the "brainchild of Angie Jackson, liberal arts coordinator of the Continuing Education Division" — but skipped any mention of the fact that the liberal arts coordinator and the reporter on the story are husband and wife.

Laurel: to the Newark *Star-Ledger* and reporter Richard Goldensohn, for an unsettling analysis of the hazardous state of the multimillion-dollar asbestos clean-up projects under way last summer in New Jersey schools. Sifting through such suffocating problems as the absence of official state or federal policy, inadequate procedures for testing and inspection, potential dangers to poorly trained workers, and risks of increased contamination of buildings due to improper handling, the four-part series (August 12-15) was followed by a pledge from the governor that New Jersey would be the first state in the nation with a comprehensive program for the safe removal of the carcinogenic fiber.

Dart: to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, for its heavy-footed headline over a July 25 sports column on the death of Jim Fixx: THE FIXX WAS IN FOR RUNNING GURU.

Dart: to the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, for a September 8 business piece whose twenty paragraphs (and 6- by 8-inch photo) were carefully programmed to capture new subscribers (and retrieve disappointed old ones) for Startext, the "increasingly sophisticated" video-text system (at \$7.95 a month plus phone) that had been developed by the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* two years before.

Dart: to the *Rocky Mountain News* and staff writer Jim Pinkelman, for a shameless piece of capitalistic puffery. Pinkelman's straightforward account of his two-week trip to the Soviet Union under the auspices of the Forum for U.S.-Soviet Dialogue and the Committee of Youth Organizations of the U.S.S.R. was accompanied by a sidebar containing generous praise from Soviet delegates to the forum for the amount of information, many ads, pretty color, and even-handed coverage of the Denver area's "No. 1 daily."

Dart: to the *Arkansas Democrat*, for "An Arkansas Success Story," an eight-page, four-color "Special Report" (Sunday, September 2) celebrating local hero William T. Dillard, head of the fast-growing chain of Dillard Department Stores and one of the paper's largest advertisers. Published on the occasion of Dillard's seventieth birthday and accompanied by photos that ranged from the modest family homestead and Dillard's old high school to the multimillion-dollar company's latest operation in a North Little Rock mall, the tribute outlined his childhood, education, business career, and philanthropic works, projected a dazzling corporate future, and revealed the astrological birth sign of "Just Plain Bill."



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Public Affairs Department, Exxon Corporation, 1251 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10020

Mapping out Moon's media empire

A survey of the Korean preacher's far-flung media operations, with a trek into fiscal terra incognita

by KAREN ROTHMYER

Several weeks after his departure as editor and publisher of *The Washington Times*, James Whelan still looks as though he's not quite sure what hit him. A big man, whose girth is matched by his occasionally hyperbolic style, Whelan only a short time ago enjoyed both the power and the rewards that come with media prominence in the nation's capital: a mansion-sized home in suburban Virginia bought by the Unification Church for more than a half-million dollars; an office complete with private bath and bar in the sleekly gleaming Washington Times Building; and a business and social schedule that regularly resulted in his rubbing elbows with the movers and shakers within the ruling circles of conservative political power.

For the moment, at least, the house remains, but the office is gone, along with the reserved parking spot right next to the front entrance of the *Times*. The friends in the conservative movement are still friends, says Whelan, but many have been far less exercised than he had expected over what he regards as the demise of the paper as an independent entity. "They seem to feel, 'Better a tainted *Times* than no *Times*,'" says Whelan, returning yet again to his contention that the paper is no longer independent of the church headed by Reverend Sun Myung Moon.

As Whelan describes it, his firing in July by Colonel Bo Hi Pak, Moon's chief aide in the United States, stemmed directly from his unwillingness to let the church take over the business side of the paper, which he had been running along with the editorial operation. "We're not talking about Knight-Ridder; we're talking about the Unification movement," he says. Implying vaguely unsettling motives on the part of the organization he routinely defended in ringing terms while at the *Times*, he adds, "They are a worldwide interlocking network pursuing the same strategic goals. For the credibility of the *Times* to mean anything it was essential that it be totally independent. Otherwise, if the top people

in the church were to play any role in the paper, how could anyone know what hats they were wearing?"

Moreover, Whelan contends, the decision to assume control of the business side of the paper was the opening move in an effort to exercise editorial control as well. "Once Pak was on-site it would be an act of faith to imagine he wouldn't nibble away at the edges to manipulate content," says Whelan. "Even when the wall was there, there were problems."

Church officials stoutly deny that there is any plan to infringe on the newspaper's editorial independence. "Basically, our original philosophy was to hire Jim Whelan because we felt his editorial and philosophical perspective were very close to ours and that he'd hire a staff that would do things like support conservative government," says Robert Spitz, general counsel to News World Communications, Inc., the parent of *The Washington Times*. "And we feel

Deposed chief: *Former Washington Times editor and publisher James Whelan at his suburban Virginia mansion.*



Barbara Hadley

Karen Rothmyer is a contributing editor of the Review. Research assistance was provided by Naomi Marcus.

the staff is doing that. And, because that's true, there is no need or desire to exert pressure." Speaking for *The Washington Times*, assistant general manager Philip Evans says that Whelan's departure stemmed primarily from Whelan's shortcomings as a manager.

There is no doubt, judging by the comments and actions

of *Times* employees, that Whelan was something less than beloved within the organization that he himself had put together. The paper's staff members recall with great glee how they celebrated Whelan's leaving with a march to Whelan's office to polish off his private liquor supply. Senior executives of the paper expressed their feelings in a state-

Educating journalists — and other crusades

By the end of this year, close to 2,500 journalists will have participated in media conferences and fact-finding tours sponsored by the World Media Association, a project of News World Communications. This year's seventh annual conference, to be held in Tokyo in November on the topic of "Media Credibility and Social Responsibility," is expected to draw 700 participants — some chosen on the basis of applications and some personally invited — from 100 countries.

"When we started the conferences, they were seen primarily as an intellectual exercise, and those attending were primarily media scholars," says Larry Moffitt, executive director of the association. "Now the participants are almost all working journalists, with a sprinkling of public officials, and we discuss real front-line issues such as nuclear energy." He adds, "The World Media Association wants to help journalists understand the world better, not just be more anticommunist, although of course we'd like them to be anticommunist."

As of this year, according to Moffitt, participants will be required to submit a paper in exchange for plane fare and accommodation, making the trips seem less like a junket.

In addition to the conferences, the association sponsors fact-finding tours to places that have included Central America, Europe, the Soviet Union, and Asia. Ken Ellis, executive producer of public television station KQED in San Francisco, was among the 190 journalists on the Asia tour last spring, which included interviews with prime ministers and other high officials. Ellis, who attended in the course of producing a documentary aired in August about the Unification Church's activities, says he found the tour useful "just to get a sense of the geography of the place and the people," although he would have liked more give-and-take with government leaders. Ellis adds that "the vast majority" of those on the trip were conservative, and that most had been on other association-sponsored expeditions. Of about thirty people he asked, Ellis says, only one was paying any portion of the costs — which, as billed to his station, amounted to \$5,000.

Moffitt declines to give details of the association's budget but says that the Asian tour cost about \$500,000. Based on that estimate, a rough guess would put the association's expenses to date, apart from administration, at around \$5 million.

Ellis says he found the tour leaders "decent and bright. I felt the Moonies were not all brainwashed automatons." At the same time, he says, "the sheer clout and power —

the way they orchestrated the tour and the fact that they could get such influential people to speak to us — gave me misgivings about their money and how they use it."

The church also attempts to educate journalists through Causa International, its anticommunist affiliate. So far, according to Tom Ward, vice-president of Causa International, about 300 to 400 journalists have attended seminars held in conjunction with Media Association activities, while others have attended regular Causa seminars. Maria Blacque-Belair, a journalist who attended a Causa seminar for French leaders held in Washington this past summer, described the participants, among whom were a number of mayors, as heavily drawn from the right wing. Blacque-Belair categorized the lectures as straightforwardly anticommunist, with a heavy dose of Unificationism thrown in. According to Ward, each seminar costs "at least \$100,000," with some participants paying their own way.

Causa has also become involved in attempts to influence public opinion through means other than educating journalists. According to a September 14 story in *The Washington Post*, Causa has contributed \$500,000 to finance a new anticommunist lobbying campaign headed by John T. "Terry" Dolan, chairman of the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC). CALL, as the campaign is called, is using the funds to pay for television commercials and mailings promoting legislation to cut off the importation of goods from communist countries, block high-technology transfers to the Soviet Union, and support development of antisatellite weapons, according to the *Post* account. As described by the *Post*, the donation has caused a serious rift among conservative activists, many of whom backed out of CALL when they learned about the church financing.

Last spring, according to *The Washington Post* of September 17, another church group, the Freedom Leadership Foundation, engaged in a different kind of effort to affect public opinion: it paid for four Republican Senate staff members to fly to Central America. There, according to the *Post*, the group met with government leaders and U.S. embassy officials in Honduras and Guatemala and joined the official U.S. delegation sent to observe the Salvadoran election.

According to the same *Post* account, the church is spending \$1.5 million a year on a Washington-based think tank, the Washington Institute for Values in Public Policy, which is underwriting conservative research and seminars around the country.

K.R.

ment in which they declared that they did "not feel it is in the best interest of *The Washington Times*" for Whelan to remain.

Still, the case that Whelan makes against the church is persuasive enough to at least raise some questions about both the *Times* and the whole church-related network of newspapers and media enterprises. These include, in addition to the *Times*, the *New York Tribune* and *Noticias del Mundo*, both dailies in New York; *Ultimas Noticias*, a daily in Uruguay; *Sekai Nippo*, a daily in Japan; *The Middle East Times*, a weekly published in Cyprus; and the *Harlem Weekly* and *Saegae Shinbo*, both weeklies in New York. In addition, the church, through News World Communications, sponsors media conferences and tours (see sidebar) and runs a small press service.

Considerable testimony exists to indicate that these diverse enterprises — some of which are run by church members and others of which are run by outsiders but with church backing — are doing a credible and professional job. But the very fact that the church was willing to press its wishes

to a point that gave Whelan the motivation and ammunition to mount a public attack suggests, at the very least, that church policymakers have concerns transcending their interest in winning acceptance for their media projects. Moreover, the size of the church's investment in the *Times* — revealed in the exchange of charges between Whelan and *Times* and church officials — has been enough to prompt anew the kinds of questions about the church's money-raising techniques that have dogged the organization from its earliest days.

Why Moon went into the newspaper business

Reverend Sun Myung Moon founded the Unification Church in 1954 in South Korea after spending several years in prison under the North Korean Communist regime because of his early evangelical activities. Within a few years the church began to send out missionaries — first to Japan, later to the U.S. and other parts of the world — and in 1971 Moon himself moved to America. Here, he continued to preach a set of principles that include devotion to God, the family,

Ted Thai/Sigma

'Most of the Korean journalists I've talked to think [Moon] is a very bizarre character and can't understand why anyone takes him seriously'

Gari Ledyard, professor of East Asian languages and cultures, Columbia University

Moon addressing a Korean audience and (inset) with Colonel Bo Hi Pak, at a God Bless America Festival



Liaison

and stamping out communism. The church, now headquartered in New York, estimates that it has three million members worldwide, including about 2.5 million in Japan and Korea and about 45,000 in the U.S. (Membership estimates differ widely; the ousted editor of the church's Japanese newspaper put Japanese membership at 8,000 and Korean and U.S. membership at 2,000 each in a recent article in *Bungei Shunju* magazine.)

Moon is treated far more seriously in the U.S. than in either Japan or Korea, according to Gari Ledyard, professor of East Asian languages and cultures at Columbia University. Korean Christians tend to shy away from Moon even though there are many Korean cultural elements in Moon's theology, according to Ledyard, and the Korean government appears to have far less friendly relations with Moon than it once did. In addition, says Ledyard, "Most of the Korean journalists I've talked to think the man is a very bizarre character and can't understand why anyone takes him seriously." A similar attitude prevails in Japan, Ledyard says, adding, "Most journalists in Japan are leftists, and the leftists regard Moon as a right-wing fanatic."

The fact that most Americans tend to be suspicious of Eastern religions made Moon an object of media attention from the start, Ledyard believes. In addition, he says, early incidents of alleged kidnapping and "brainwashing" hurt the church's image, prompting critical stories in the American press.

It was partly in response to such treatment that the church founded its first American newspaper, *The News World*, in 1976. "At one time Reverend Moon said the paper was to replace *The New York Times*," a former member of the paper's management recalls. "He wanted a clean paper, wholesome and moral, and anticommunist — a paper close to God's providence. He also wanted a paper that would ensure that you don't kick Reverend Moon around." As to why the paper was located in New York, the former employee says that Moon "looks on New York as the most influential city in the world."

Something of this same philosophy can be found in the comments of Robert Spitz, the church's general counsel, a church member since 1975. "We want to create a God-centered, ethical way of life," Spitz says. "Our involvement in the media stems from a basic understanding that the media play a very significant role in shaping the philosophy, the morals — shaping the viewpoint of society."

Where does all the money come from?

Such involvement does not come cheap. Based on the best figures available, media activities appear to be costing the church somewhere between \$40 million and \$50 million a year. That's an amount that would stun even a major corporation. Yet, despite the prospect of continuing large losses at *The Washington Times* and continuing lesser losses elsewhere, all the talk is of growth. "We would certainly like to expand to other cities of the world for the same reasons we have newspapers in America," says Spitz. "Our goal is to help shape public opinion."

Church officials say that the organization's media activities are subsidized by profits from its business holdings,

which are considerable. In Korea, Moon's original base, these include the manufacturing of arms and the production and marketing of ginseng, vases, and titanium dioxide (used in the paint and rubber industries), as detailed in a 1978 congressional report on Korean influence-buying attempts. In 1975, the report says, basing its information on Commerce Department figures, these companies, some of which later developed affiliated businesses in Japan, had combined assets of just under \$15 million and earnings of \$1.9 million. *The Washington Post* recently quoted a Korean publication as stating that in 1983 the Korean businesses had estimated total assets of \$198 million.

Just what these businesses are earning is an important question, because church officials have said that their profits are covering the losses of *The Washington Times*, the most expensive of the church's media operations. Whelan, who concedes that he never pushed Pak on the matter of the source of the paper's funding, says that Pak "always gave me to understand that the money came primarily from businesses in Japan, and secondarily from businesses in Korea. I was convinced that I could not find out [the complete facts], and so long as I was assured that the funds were from neither fraudulent nor illicit sources I saw no problem."

Yoshikazu Soejima, the ousted editor of the church's Japanese paper, said in his *Bungei Shunju* article that what he described as "donations" totaling about \$800 million have been made to the church by Japanese members. *The Washington Post*, in an article on September 16, described Soejima as having said in an interview that at least that amount has been transferred over the past nine years into the U.S. to finance the church's political activities and business operations. Soejima was quoted as saying that the transfers included \$2.5 million a month earmarked for *The Washington Times*.

According to the *Post* account, Soejima said the money comes from the sale by church members of marble vases, miniature pagodas, and religious icons that are represented as having supernatural powers, with the entire operation under the direction of a church-controlled parent firm. The article quoted an official of the firm as saying that the company is not a church organization but that some employees may be church members.

Soejima's description of Japanese fund-raising activities accords with the statement of a former senior member of the Unification Church of America that the main source of money for church projects of all kinds comes from street fund-raising (fund-raising being a term that covers such activities as selling roses or icons). Five years ago, this former member says, the church's 800 full-time fund-raisers in the U.S. were each netting an average of \$100 a day. And, he says, the church had three times as many fund-raisers in Japan. Substantiation for the proposition that fund-raising could indeed be the mainstay of the church was contained in a *New York Times* interview with Mose Durst, president of the Unification Church of America, at the time of Moon's incarceration in July of this year after being convicted on charges of tax evasion. In that interview, Durst



Church-related businesses: Among them are Il Hwa, in Korea, whose products include ginseng soft drinks sold in the U.S., and a fishing fleet and sea-food restaurant in Gloucester, Massachusetts.



is quoted as saying that the \$25,000 in taxes that the government charged had been evaded by Moon represents "50 minutes of fund-raising in New York in one day."

Instruments of a cause

Just as it is difficult to get a clear idea of the church's finances, so, too, it is difficult to understand the administrative structure of the church, including its media enterprises. Within the media group, most operations fall under the umbrella of News World Communications, but several operate under separate arrangements. Even within News World Communications it is unclear just who answers to whom. Evans, the *Washington Times* official, bristles when told that a News World spokesman has made certain comments about the paper's operations. "We are an entirely different operation than the other publications," he says.

The one man who understands how all the pieces of the church's media activities fit together is Bo Hi Pak, chairman and president of News World Communications. Pak, variously described by persons who have encountered him as articulate and sincere or indirect and difficult — assessments as varied as those of the church itself — declined to be interviewed for this article, citing through an intermediary the potential legal problems associated with James Whelan's departure from the *Times*. (Both Moon and Pak, a former

Korean army officer, were described in the 1978 congressional report on Korean influence-buying as having had contacts with the Korean CIA. The only instance acknowledged to the committee, by Pak, was one which Pak said consisted of his passing on funds to a church member at the behest of the intelligence agency.)

Under Pak's guidance, the church's media involvement has grown from one church-related paper to the variety of publications that exists today. In a rare interview earlier this year with KQED public television station in San Francisco, Pak described the church's media activities as growing out of a belief that the world is currently engaged in what he called a "war of ideas" between those who believe in God and those who believe in communism. Pak said that the media organizations the church has set up "want to be utilized as an instrument — instrument of our cause, instrument of our purpose. And I want to be proud to say, to be an instrument to be used by God." He added, "We're committed, we're committed to the cause. The cause is a God-centered world view. In other words, stop the spread of communism."

The first church newspaper was *Sekai Nippo*, begun in 1975 in Japan. As described in a News World Communications publication, *Sekai Nippo* "differs from other major Japanese dailies in its conservative orientation and emphasis on providing the public with moral and ethical education as well as information." The paper does not belong to the Japanese equivalent of the Audit Bureau of Circulations, but, according to an American reporter in Japan, the paper estimates its circulation at about 270,000. (This compares with a combined morning and evening circulation of more than 13 million for *Yomiuri Shimbun* and more than 12 million for *Asahi Shimbun*, both of which are national dailies.) According to Yoshikazu Soejima, the departed editor, circulation of *Sekai Nippo* was actually about 35,000 when he left a year ago. Japanese journalists and government officials describe the paper as relatively insignificant on the national scene.

According to Soejima's article, as translated and summarized in *The Daily Yomiuri*, the English edition of *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Soejima tried during his three years with *Sekai Nippo* to make it appeal to a wider audience by loosening its ties to the church. Last October, he says, acting on direct orders from Moon, the head of a church anticommunist organization in Japan took over the newspaper's offices, ousting him and other staff members who supported the changes he had made. In a recent statement, *Sekai Nippo* said that Soejima was dismissed not because of his editorial stand but because he was trying to take over the company. "The editorial policy of the company has not changed between before and after [Soejima's departure]," the statement said.

Another overseas media venture of the church is *Ultimas Noticias*, an afternoon tabloid founded in Uruguay in 1981. According to editor and publisher Julian Safi, who at one time served as the Uruguayan government's chief spokesman, his involvement with the church began when Pak visited the country several years ago while in the process of starting a Spanish-language daily in New York. "I was

director of a morning paper and Pak came looking for professionals to help," Safi says. "Sometime later they offered to help our economy by making investments here. I proposed to them to print a newspaper and they said, 'Okay, if you can earn money from a newspaper, we will give you the money to start.'"

Safi declines to say how much the loan was for, or to say whether or not the paper is earning money, but he does admit that he hasn't yet been able to pay back the loan — in large part, he says, because of poor economic conditions in Uruguay. Safi says that there are no church members on the staff and that the paper is politically independent, a characterization described as accurate by Danilo Arbilla, a journalist known as a long-time critic of Uruguay's military regime. Arbilla describes the paper as heavy on crime and sports news, with a greater degree of objectivity than its two Uruguayan competitors. Arbilla adds that, editorially, the paper has "shown support for a democratic solution in Uruguay."

Safi claims that the paper has a circulation of at least 25,000, making it second in the afternoon market. While not disputing its second-place position, Carlos Varela, a Uruguayan advertising agency employee who also writes for a weekly newspaper, says the figure is closer to 15,000, as compared with the leading daily's 40,000. He attributes *Ultimas Noticias'* growth in part to a cheaper newsstand price than its competitors, in part to the fact that it pays well and therefore attracts top writers.

In addition to running the newspaper, Safi is head of the Uruguayan branch of Causa, the Unification Church-related organization dedicated to fighting communism. To raise money for that purpose, according to Safi, the church has made a number of investments in Uruguay, with himself as coordinator. These include, according to various reports, one of the country's largest banks, a new hotel in the heart of Montevideo, and what Safi describes as the largest printing plant in the country. This plant, Safi says, prints about fifty publications of all political hues, including socialist. "Our philosophy is democracy and we are trying to practice it in this way," Safi says.

Elsewhere in Latin America, at various times rumors have been rife with regard to supposed church efforts to buy newspapers in Argentina and Honduras, where Pak is known to have been received by high government officials. However, owners of the newspapers in question say they have never been approached by church officials, and the church denies any interest in the publications.

The newest of the major church-related overseas publications is *The Middle East Times*, a weekly started last year in Cyprus. Publisher Thomas Cromwell, an Englishman who joined the church while living in America, says he "felt there was a need for a better-quality" English-language weekly in the area and convinced News World Communications to underwrite such a venture. Cromwell, who formerly worked for other news organizations in the Middle East, says that while the paper is nonpartisan, its anticommunist and "moderate" perspective may give it a conservative cast. If so, he says, this puts it very much in tune with

its readers — 7,000 to 8,000 by Cromwell's reckoning — who he says are heavily concentrated in Lebanon and Saudi Arabia and include both Arabs and a large number of managers of international companies. Cromwell says that, owing in part to the Moonie label, advertising has been slow to develop, causing losses of about \$200,000 a year.

Several people who are familiar with the paper note its ability to attract topflight contributors but question whether its perspective really is as moderate as Cromwell contends. Mona Schaheen, a journalist from Cyprus who worked briefly for *The Middle East Times* and who has been a stringer for several other publications, says the paper "tries to sound neutral but all its analyses are conservative. It is always directed toward America, and very much against the nationalist movements in the area."

Elsewhere outside the U.S., the church's media activities have been limited. The church has published newsletters and magazines in various countries, most notably France, but these usually have been almost solely aimed at members.

New York: Four papers, three languages — and columnist Koch

The church's American media activities began with the founding of *The News World*, a New York daily, in 1976. In 1983, in a revamped form, the paper became the *New York Tribune*, a conservatively oriented daily with an emphasis on international news and commentary. The paper draws on UPI and other wire services to supplement its own coverage. This past summer, the *Tribune* scored a coup when it revealed on July 24 that the real estate firm run by the husband of Democratic vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro managed a building identified by law enforcement officials as housing a major distributor of pornography. The English-language daily in New York was followed in 1980 by *Noticias del Mundo*, a Spanish-language daily that emphasizes local and Latin news. *Noticias* is in the process of going national, aiming at introduction in Los Angeles this year and in Miami and Chicago in 1985. News World Communications also publishes a free tabloid, the *Harlem Weekly*, started in 1979, and runs a small news service, Free Press International. All the publications operate out of a granite-and-marble structure on lower Fifth Avenue that once housed the Tiffany jewelry firm.

The *New York Tribune* has a current circulation of about 50,000; *Noticias*, a circulation of 48,000; and the free weekly, a print-run of 21,000, according to company officials. Robert Spitz, the company lawyer, says combined losses for the *Tribune* and *Noticias* are currently between \$5 million and \$6 million a year. All but about a million of that, according to Spitz, is covered by business ventures, many of them spin-offs from the papers, including job-printing and graphic design. Reggie Rush, editor of the *Harlem Weekly*, declines to discuss that paper's budget but says it is getting closer to breaking even.

Tribune editor Robert Morton says that circulation of his paper has dropped about 20,000 in the past two years — a decline he attributes to the fact that the bulk of promotion money has been poured into *The Washington Times*. "We're in the category of 'samizdat,'" he jokes, adding that with



Quartet and contributor: Mayor Edward Koch writes a column for the largest of New York City's four church-related newspapers.



Chris Gierlich

such a small circulation the paper has no current plans for an official audit. He says that Free Press International, a mailed weekly selection of stories, currently goes to fewer than a dozen subscribers but that plans call for developing within the next year a nationally available supplemental news service.

New York City officials familiar with the church's publications are generally positive about their coverage. Sam Samuels, public information officer for Queens borough president Donald Manes, says that the quality of the *Tribune's* metropolitan reporting "compares favorably with the other papers." Samuels adds, "They have some knowledge of the subject and they don't just work off press releases." Because of the paper's small circulation, however, Samuels says, Manes and other top borough officeholders don't feel it essential to read the paper.

Not so Mayor Edward I. Koch, who, according to aides, always reads stories relating to the city and who in fact recently began writing a weekly column in the *Tribune*. "We feel Koch resonates with the public mood pretty well," Morton says, adding that, "if he works out," the column, which Koch does for free, may become part of the proposed news service.

Manny Rosa, special assistant to Bronx state assemblyman Jose Serrano, credits editors of *Noticias del Mundo* with giving considerable play to local stories, especially those with "good news" aspects, and with being alert to the interests of their readers. Citing the craze among young Hispanics for Menudo, a music group, Rosa says, "They were smart enough to use this to perfection. Kids were always picking up the paper, and that will help to build circulation." He adds, "They're a lot more conservative

than *El Diario* [*El Diario-La Prensa*, the main Spanish-language paper] and they write more about Moon, for example with his tax case. But I don't think they write tainted or slanted stories. In that respect, they're true journalists."

Similar sentiments are expressed about the *Harlem Weekly* by Charles McKinney, special assistant to congressman Charles Rangel, who represents Harlem. "They do a fairly commendable job of reporting what's happening," McKinney says. "If I didn't know it was a Moonie paper I wouldn't realize it."

Despite such positive assessments, all the papers continue to suffer from a lack of advertising. *Tribune* ad director Art Ingolia says he is optimistic that the Koch column will enhance his paper's credibility but adds that the Moon connection, coupled with the lack of audited circulation figures, makes it very difficult to attract advertisers. Companies that do advertise sometimes experience repercussions. One Manhattan restaurant owner says that he received a number of complaints from church opponents after he placed ads in the paper. "I didn't know what was going on," the owner says. "I didn't want to get my temperature up, so we stopped."

Advertising is also a problem for *Saegae Shinbo*, a Korean-language weekly published in New York and underwritten by the church, though separately from News World Communications. Hyong R. Lee, editor and publisher, says that the large number of Korean-language papers in America competing for limited ad dollars has meant that none can afford to do a top-quality job. It was for this reason, he says, that when he decided to try to start a newspaper in 1982, he turned to the Unification Church for help. "We



Capital presence: *The Times*, whose headquarters are shown above, quickly won access to the Reagan White House. In 1982 correspondent Jeremiah O'Leary was granted an exclusive interview with Reagan; presidential adviser Ed Meese lunched with the paper's editors, as did several cabinet members.



are totally independent," he says. "So far I have never been interfered with." At the moment, Lee says, the paper, with a staff of twenty and a national subscription circulation of 7,500, is losing about \$30,000 a month.

What is particularly striking about the church's agreement to underwrite *Saegae Shinbo* is that the decision was taken at the time the church was beginning its most financially ambitious media project ever, *The Washington Times*.

The showpiece of the empire

The *Times* is clearly the showpiece of the church's media empire. Even the setting is regal: located next to the National Arboretum, with a view into the greenery beyond, the building housing the *Times* is replete with brass railings, beige carpets, and marble columns that convey an air of expensive good taste. Nor has any effort been spared to recruit a first-rate staff. Whelan, a one-time Nieman fellow and formerly editor of *The Sacramento Union*, was earning \$90,000 at the time of his departure, and other top officials are paid on a similar scale. The paper was able to attract a number of well-known journalists, among them Pulitzer Prize-winner Clark Mollenhoff, along with a sizable contingent from the defunct *Washington Star*.

Because the church so obviously sees the *Times* as its bid to make it in the big leagues, it seems clear that decisions made with regard to the paper represent the thinking of church officials at the highest level. Seen in this light, the events surrounding the departure of James Whelan become significant for what they may reveal about the church's long-range intentions and about its methods of operation.

To date, according to *Times* officials, News World has invested \$150 million in the five-day-a-week paper. The current year's budget, according to Evans, the assistant gen-

eral manager, foresees outlays of \$31.2 million and total revenues of more than \$5 million, for a loss of about \$25 million overall. Evans says that another \$7 million has been spent to date on a national edition of the paper that began with distribution in California in the spring and is expected to expand to Chicago before the end of the year. By late summer, according to Evans, circulation in California was close to 24,400, some 90 percent of that by mail delivery, and circulation of the Washington edition of the *Times* was 95,500. (Evans added that an official audit was planned for the fall.) While the paper is investigating facsimile transmission costs to Europe, Evans says there is no truth to rumors circulating in Europe that a major expansion there is planned. "Whelan may have had grandiose thoughts of a consortium of world conservative papers," he says, but adds that there is no likelihood now of such thoughts being realized.

According to Evans, the *Times* established itself quickly as a paper of substance and influence in the capital. "As early as the summer of 1982, when the Reagan tax proposals were being opposed by many Republicans, especially on the right, the president felt compelled to give an interview to Jerry O'Leary [*the Times's* White House correspondent]," Evans says. "He clearly felt that was the way to reach his political constituency."

Stephen Hess of The Brookings Institution, who recently spent a year in five federal press offices in preparation for another in a series of books on the Washington media, says that he encountered the *Times* everywhere he went — including the Reagan White House, where it is one of a half-dozen papers included in the daily press summary. "Most people at a certain level of government and up read what's

written about them, and about their agencies and enemies," Hess says. "From that you have to conclude that if people read it, therefore it's influential." He adds, "The *Times* is a fairly interesting paper. It's got a variety of columns and it's not anything that wouldn't be the major paper in Dayton or Canton or some other similar city. If it does have a conservative slant, gee, maybe that means it's more in the mainstream than *The Washington Post*."

While agreeing with Hess that the *Times* provides an important forum for the airing of conservative ideas, David Gergen, former White House communications director, says his sense is that the paper's influence has, if anything, diminished over time, including at the White House, because it has not gained widespread acceptance beyond the conservative community. "The paper has had a very, very hard time shaking the Moonie label," says Gergen, now a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. "Politicians also are influenced by the degree of clout a publication carries. And they know that, every morning, executives pick up *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. Those papers form their world view. So the various factors feed on each other."

Gergen says that journalists' attitudes toward the paper have contributed to its lack of impact. "Almost no journalist in Washington takes the paper seriously," he says. "There's a disdain — an attitude that you shouldn't read it." That attitude, he says, "is part of the Washington culture." Gergen adds that the paper's standing is likely to suffer further from the departure of Whelan, whom he describes as "a man who commanded respect."

As Whelan recalls the developments leading to that departure, he perceived a change in the church's attitude toward the paper beginning last spring, at a time when church officials were preparing for Moon's likely imprisonment on the tax-evasion charge. One of the first indications of the change, Whelan says, was Pak's appointment of a new Korean assistant during a time when Whelan was away. "I know a Trojan horse when I see one," Whelan says. At about the same time, according to Whelan, Pak began to complain that he wasn't getting enough information — a situation that Whelan says he tried to help remedy by agreeing to Pak's attendance at three management meetings, for informational purposes only.

A copy of the minutes of one of those meetings, on June 12, taken by another executive of the paper but furnished by Whelan, shows Pak seemingly involving himself in very specific details, such as his suggestion that the paper "should have a bureau in Berlin, not Toronto," and his insistence that the front page of the capital edition remain different from that of the national edition. At another point, the notes refer to a discussion of who will be sent to the paper's new Peking bureau. The notes read: "Col. Pak: Ideologically important, people we send, are they for us?" Smith Hempstone, then executive editor, is shown as responding, "Yes, but that's what editors are for." Asked about that particular quote by a *Washington Post* reporter shortly after Whelan left, Hempstone replied, "I suppose what he meant there is, by sending a relatively inexperienced reporter to Peking are they going to be taken in by the

propaganda." Hempstone, who was named to take over the top editing job from Whelan, added, according to the *Post* account, "I'm not disturbed by it. . . . I was much more disturbed when Whelan would [raise questions about political sympathies] because he was able to enforce it."

According to Whelan, things moved quickly toward a climax in the month following that meeting. At the end of June, he says, he was told that Pak had decided to take over all noneditorial functions and, after two weeks of resistance, he was removed on July 13. Four days later, Whelan held a press conference at which he announced that "*The Washington Times* is now firmly in the hands of top officials of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church movement. *The Washington Times* has become a 'Moonie newspaper.'"

Times officials responded with a press conference of their own, at which Hempstone charged that Whelan's contentions were a cover for Whelan's loss of support among his subordinates. He also said that Whelan was unhappy over his failure to win a revised employment contract that would have more than doubled his salary in five years. (Whelan maintains that he withdrew his salary demands before the final blowup.) Reporters at the paper, like their editor, dismiss any suggestion of church encroachment. Noted one, a few weeks after Whelan left, "If Moon wants to take over, why has the number of Moonies in the newsroom steadily been going down? There are no more than twenty, at the most, left now."

Time will very likely determine whether there is substance to Whelan's charges. One move not long after his departure that was bound to add to the speculation was the division of news responsibility among four assistant managing editors — two of them church members who had been with the paper since its start. Managing editor Woody West says that he made the appointments strictly on the basis of merit, adding that the designations only made formal what had been the reality for some time. While the new arrangement had been in the works since spring, West says, "If I'd known what was going to happen I would have done it quicker or sat on it for awhile."

But even after the question of editorial control of the *Times* is answered one way or the other — and certainly even some of the overtly church-run publications have demonstrated that "Moonie" editorial control does not necessarily equate with propaganda — questions about Moon's true goals and the methods he uses to attain them will remain. The church's ultraconservative, highly political presence in Washington, together with the image it projects of a secretive organization built on arms manufacture, the sweated labor of dedicated young converts, and possibly other, still unrevealed sources of income, do not accord easily with the church's professed dedication to the spiritual unity of the world. Doubts arising from these seeming contradictions are likely to plague the church long after charges of brainwashing or the current claims of editorial takeover are forgotten. And as journalists, the church's media leaders should know that for a politician, a newspaper, or a church, nothing is more likely to be fatal than doubt. ■

Privacy and the electronic

Even with secret log-on passwords, personal files may not be secure

A journalist at *The Houston Post* typed an ecstatic and detailed review of the previous night's erotic activities into her newsroom computer. She followed it with a torrid forecast of the pleasures she looked forward to enjoying that night. Then she tapped a key and sent the material — she thought — to her newsroom lover. Instead, the note went to the composing room, where a foreman set it in 36-point type and posted it on a bulletin board.

The foreman had the delicacy to delete the writer's name from the posted copy. He took the original printout — with the name — to production editor Mike Read, who nursemaids the *Post's* newsroom computers. Read took it to the writer, warning her that it would be wise to exercise caution to preserve her privacy in the computer system.

Because of such incidents, many journalists have come to doubt that the computer really offers privacy — that they have the electronic equivalent of a locked desk drawer or that they can send messages to each other via the computer with assurance that the messages will remain private.

In virtually all computerized newsrooms every new employee is given a password or "log-on" that is his or her personal key to the system. The structure of passwords differs from system to system, but the key part of any password consists of four to six letters or digits that are unique to one reporter or editor. The reporter or editor types those secret characters on his or her electronic keyboard, and they do not show up on the video display terminal. Thus, they would not be visible to someone looking over the operator's shoulder, for example. Once logged on, the operator can

use the computer keyboard and video display terminal to take notes, write memos and stories, send material on to be edited, or as a means of storing unfinished stories, notes, and phone numbers, as well as love letters, resumé's (not considered good form), or poetry in a personal electronic file. The file is "locked." Nobody else can get into it except the reporter — and maybe one or two high-ranking editors, and the system manager, who has everybody's password. Finally, of course, there are the technicians who keep the system going. In a pinch, they, too, can gain access to the file.

Mike Read's counterpart at the Chicago *Sun-Times* is Dan Sullivan. Sullivan's advice to new reporters is to memorize their password, then eat the paper it's written on. Usually they laugh, but, Sullivan says, many later apologize for having done so because somehow their password has gotten out.

Many, probably most, reporters and copy editors take no particular interest in their computers once they have learned how to use them. Others find computers fascinating. They play with them. They experiment with them. They become the newsroom "hackers," poking and probing into the system, trying to guess people's passwords and doping out ways to get into files that are designed to be private. For them, outsmarting the security system is an intellectual challenge.

In most cases, these efforts are innocent enough. Michael Hiltzik, now a financial writer in the *Los Angeles Times's* New York bureau, recalls that the memos composed on the computer system and sent from one person to another in the *Times's* newsroom used to be preserved for twenty-four hours in an electronic "spike" file even after the recipient had tapped a key to discard the memo. The spike file was readily accessible to newsroom hackers. Staff members regularly went through the file, examining exchanges of notes among editors.

Steve Berg, now in the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune's* Washington bureau, recalls that an assistant city editor at the

Tribune used the same electronic slug each night to report to the city editor on the performance of staff members. Nightsiders simply waited until she went home, typed the slug on a keyboard, and called up the reports to see what she had said.

Sometimes the intrusions are less innocent. Two years ago, for example, staff members at *The Sacramento Bee* gained access to one reporter's file and made several of her stories disappear. The practice stopped when management warned that a repetition would be grounds for instant dismissal.

At the *Herald* in Calgary, Alberta, the system editor himself was dismissed for writing obscene messages about the city editor into the system over a period of months. (He was apparently motivated by the fact that his wife had resigned as a reporter because of disputes with the city editor.) The culprit was caught only because the managing editor, after leaving the building, returned to take care of a piece of unfinished business. He had checked the system before leaving. Happening to check it again, he found a new message about the city editor. He fingered the systems man as the only person in the newsroom at the time who was competent to sneak the message into the system.

At *The New York Times* three years ago a reporter who had not passed a probationary tryout wrote a memo to executive editor A. M. Rosenthal complaining that supervisors had not given him a fair chance. Unknown to the probationer, the *Times* computer routinely made a copy of memos sent through the system, a fail-safe measure. *Times* hackers, who had long since succeeded in tapping into the duplicates file, brought the memo out of storage and circulated it throughout the newsroom.

A more serious incident occurred at the *Times* when, in 1978, an assistant metropolitan editor sent a memo to his superiors while then metropolitan editor Sydney Schanberg was away. The assistant editor suggested changes that would have diminished Schanberg's au-

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newsroom

by RICHARD P. CUNNINGHAM

thority and augmented his own. The hackers found the dupe, showed it around, and steered it to Schanberg. The same assistant editor asked for a more secure file. He was given one, but the hackers got into it. This time they took out a sensitive personnel file and showed it to the colleague about whom it was written.

At about the same time, a *Times* reporter used her computer terminal to write an outline for a musical comedy based on a newspaper at which all the characters had something to hide. To her embarrassment, hackers not only found the file and distributed the outline but,

in one version, changed the editors' names to make them sound like those of actual *Times* editors.

The best-known example of intercepting and broadcasting *Times* memos occurred in 1982, when correspondent Thomas L. Friedman got into a dispute with the foreign desk over the desk's alteration of his report on Israeli bombing of Beirut. Friedman's memo, which came into the *Times* computer over a special circuit that the *Times* leases from Reuters, and his editors' responses not only got out in the *Times* newsroom but also found their way into *The Village Voice* and other publications.

Since then the *Times* has restricted access to wire copy, and foreign correspondents have been told to use another medium for confidential messages. As for duplicate files of memorandums, Howard Angione, the newspaper's systems editor, says, "The need to make duplicates has been reduced, and when duplicates are made, they are [kept] under lock and key so that only I can get at them."

Angione says that he has ways of knowing when a password "gets loose," and that he can summarily change it. He adds that he polices the system "just enough to keep people off



base and discourage nonsense."

Sometimes management is the snoop. A reporter who asked that his name and his paper's name not be used said he had used his computer terminal to draft a letter to another publication asking for a job. He had left the draft in his system file, where he thought it would be secure. A week or so later, however, an editor asked him what he had heard about his job application.

On some newspapers respect for privacy in the electronic newsroom is a paramount concern. At *The Arizona Daily Star*, Leo Della Betta, the system supervisor and the paper's ombudsman, helped to design the system so that he can monitor the amount of material in private files but cannot read it. All systems have a limited storage capacity and thus are frequently purged of wire and local news material. Other journalistic material, such as notes, unfinished stories, and names of sources, as well as personal material, such as novels, can build up in reporters' and editors' private electronic files and threaten to overload the systems' memory capacity.

At the *Star*, when the stored material builds up, Della Betta is informed of how many characters are in each staff member's file but not what the words are. He then goes to those journalists who have built up a large volume of stored material and asks if they can't dump some of it.

At the *Los Angeles Times* today, staff members agree with assistant managing editor Ted Weegar, who says that privacy there is held virtually sacred. It is possible for the system editor to go into a private file, but, says Weegar, he does so only in an emergency — when a reporter has gone away, for example, and has forgotten to move a story from his or her file to the appropriate desk for editing. Weegar says he can count on the fingers of one hand those occasions in the past three years when such an intrusion was necessary. "I can't over-stress to you how strongly we feel about privacy," he says.

At *The Washington Post*, assistant managing editor Tom Wilkinson says that a reporter's file will be entered only with the reporter's permission. If the reporter is out of town, for example, the editor needing to get into his or her file will ask the reporter to call the system

manager directly and give permission to enter the file. One indication that *Post* staff members feel confident about the security of their electronic files, Wilkinson says, is that there have been only three or four requests for password changes over the past four years from some 500 system users.

To protect reporters' privacy, some systems were designed so as to prevent even the copy desk from gaining access to a reporter's story until he or she had finished writing it. This brought objections from copy editors who, in the old typewriter days, had been able to get a carbon of a reporter's first take and start thinking up a headline. And so the systems have been further modified so that waiting editors can call up on their own video display terminals the reporter's story in process. In effect, they can look over the reporter's shoulder electronically. "It makes me nervous," says William Braden, a veteran Chicago *Sun-Times* reporter. "It's like writing across Times Square with lights." (Some newspapers have declined to use this modification, believing that reporters should be allowed to find their way into a story without the tension that Braden speaks of.)

The new systems can also allow staff members to change their own passwords as often as they want without going to the system manager. They can jumble material in a file so that it is unreadable. They can warn the system technician when someone tries three times unsuccessfully to log on to the system — a sign that a hacker may be dopping out a password by trial and error. The new system at the *Los Angeles Times* lets a reporter or editor sign off and tell the system that he or she can sign back on only at a particular terminal. If that terminal is in a locked office a hacker cannot get into the system from another terminal even with the reporter or editor's password. Also at the *Times*, if an editor finds it necessary to go into a reporter's private file in the reporter's absence, the editor has to change the reporter's password. When the reporter returns, he or she will be confronted with a note on the video display terminal indicating that the password was changed and who changed it. In other words, the intruder leaves tracks.

Yet, whatever the degree of security, there must always be one person who knows the passwords and can get into the files. That person is, of course, the system manager. System managers say that privacy is protected from their own snooping by two factors: one, they are too busy to snoop; two, an anti-snooping attitude is developing as part of the professionalism of what is, after all, a new vocation. However, Alfred JaCoby, readers' representative at *The San Diego Union*, recalls that the system manager at that paper assured him that his computer file was private. Then he showed up later with a list of all the material in the file and asked JaCoby to get rid of some of it.

JaCoby no longer trusts the security of his own file. He borrows a colleague's to stash his column in when he doesn't want the staff to see it before publication. That way, he figures, a snooper would have to sift through all the personal files in the newsroom to find his column.

Similarly, Molly Ivins, columnist at *The Dallas Times Herald*, no longer puts personal material in her file. For her, the decisive incident was when a personal letter got loose and revealed prematurely that an editor was going to leave the newspaper.

Management, too, has grown wary. Steve Ronald, deputy managing editor at the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune*, says that he uses typewritten or even handwritten notes to communicate on such matters as merit-pay recommendations. Tom Wilkinson at *The Washington Post* does not keep salary or personnel-evaluation information in his computer file. And at *The New York Times*, despite the tightened security system, it is company policy not to put sensitive material into the system, according to systems editor Angione.

Systems suppliers agree that, despite the sophisticated security of their new systems, privacy depends, as it did in the typewriter newsroom, more on the atmosphere in the organization than on the strength of the drawer lock. Or, as Jerry Riley, senior market manager for newspaper systems at Atex, one of the leading suppliers of newsroom systems today, puts it: "It's a management problem — not management of the system, management of the newsroom." ■

The half-told story of Baby Jane Doe

Newsday won a Pulitzer but, the author argues, coverage was skewed from the start

by STEVEN BAER

One of the most significant news stories of 1983 was that of Baby Jane Doe, the celebrated Long Island newborn child whose parents declined vital surgery for her because of her foreseen disabilities. The ensuing litigation, in which issues of medical judgment and parental authority were knotted together with disability, right-to-life, and federal civil-rights concerns, engaged journalists across the nation for several weeks last fall and winter. *Newsday*, the Long Island daily that broke the story, received a Pulitzer Prize for "enterprising and comprehensive" local reporting on the case and its "far-reaching social and political implications."

Precisely because of these implications it was crucial that journalists covering the case be especially attentive to their responsibility for accurate reporting. But, as I hope to make clear, the press failed — egregiously — to meet that obligation. And, ironically, it was the journalism of *Newsday*, joined by that of the Associated Press, United Press International, *The New York Times*, and others, that skewed the story at its onset.

Almost universally, subsequent print

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and network coverage reiterated the early assumptions of these news organizations that the child, even if surgically treated, would be severely retarded, bedridden, in constant pain, and dead by the age of twenty. From the start, however, there was considerable reason to doubt whether any of these assumptions was valid. Most of them, drawn from the testimony of one physician in state lower-court hearings, were directly contradicted within the same hearings by a physician of senior rank, the only other doctor testifying.

Grim outlook

Kathleen Kerr, *Newsday*'s chief reporter on the case, broke the story on October 18, 1983, seven days after the child's birth at St. Charles Hospital in Port Jefferson, Long Island. On a tip, self-described right-to-life attorney A. Lawrence Washburn had filed in a New York lower court to have surgical procedures ordered for the girl, who was born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, but left untreated for this life-threatening condition. (Spina bifida involves the failure of the spinal column to fully enclose the spinal cord, leaving a lesion on the back. Hydrocephalus, an excessive buildup of cerebrospinal fluid around the brain, often accompanies the condition.) The parents had declined to permit surgery to repair the spinal lesion, as well as a shunting procedure to relieve pressure from the brain fluid. Without these measures, all parties agreed, it was statistically probable that Baby Jane Doe would die within two years.

A further complication was political. The child had arrived in the midst of very public battling between the medical establishment and the Reagan administration over the latter's 1983 "Baby Doe" regulation, named for another anonymous newborn child who had died in April 1982 after being denied surgery, food, and water because he had Down's syndrome. Designed to enforce Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which

prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap, the rule required federally funded hospitals to facilitate the reporting of alleged civil rights violations in the treatment of disabled infants. Medical groups and many editorialists, however, had found the measure intrusive, and it is possible this view colored some of the reporting as outsiders intervened in the new Baby Doe case.

Newsday's coverage of the October 19 lower court hearings initiated by Washburn signaled early problems. Kerr and reporter Dennis Hevesi quoted extensively from testimony by Dr. George Newman, the neurologist who had counseled the father in the decision against surgery at the time of the child's transfer to the University Hospital of the State University of New York at Stony Brook: "It would be unkind to have this kind of surgery," Newman said, because Baby Jane "has only limited ability to experience comfort and more ability to experience pain. Primarily, she would experience pain." Restating Newman's prognosis, *Newsday* said the child "probably would lie in bed for the rest of her life and have to be turned several times a day. She would experience pain from bed sores, little comfort, and suffer from bladder and kidney infection, as well as epileptic seizures. . . ." Baby Jane, Newman was quoted as saying, "would never experience joy, never experience sorrow."

Missing from the October 20 story, however, was any hint of medical dissension on the case, despite Newman's admission that the original attending neurosurgeon from St. Charles Hospital "had rendered the advice that the surgery be performed." Moreover, although Newman testified that he had persuaded this physician to "change his mind" regarding the surgery, a phone call to the neurosurgeon, made by attorneys for both parties, revealed that he, in fact, still believed the operation should be performed.

James Barron of *The New York Times* made an oblique reference to the surgery recommendation in an October 21 piece, but his account did not mention the conflicting testimonies of the doctors. None of this information, however, showed up in any *Newsday*, wire service, or other significant print accounts beyond Barron's. Indeed, it was not until November 16 that Felicity Barringer made the doctors' dispute explicit in a *Washington Post* story. As national attention and public debate over Baby Jane's fate mounted, the picture the press painted of her situation became increasingly monochromatic.

'She probably wouldn't live past 20'

The next brush stroke in that bleak portrait came when UPI added to *Newsday*'s initial courtroom coverage that Newman "estimated, with surgery, the infant could live for twenty years." Although, when asked if the child could conceivably live for twenty years after surgery, Newman had agreed that "twenty years is possible," UPI's wording strongly implied that this figure represented an *outside limit* on the child's life span. Yet when asked for his own estimate of how long she would live after treatment, Newman had testified, "There is really no way of placing a limit on it."

At the next day's hearing, however, presiding Justice Melvyn Tanenbaum inadvertently reinforced UPI's misleading report by summarizing that the "child would have a life expectancy of up to twenty years" (emphasis added). Lodged in the ruling, the portion of the 240-page trial record most accessible to reporters, this arbitrary figure was thus perpetuated by the press as the outside limit on Baby Jane's life span. No medical witness, however, had testified to that effect.

Covering the second and final day of lower court hearings (October 20), the level at which all fact-finding in the case occurred, Barron of the *Times* wrote that Baby Jane "might live to the age of twenty." Michael Hanrahan and Stuart Marques of the *New York Daily News* reported "the child could live about twenty years if surgery were performed." Robert Weddle of the *New York Post* said "she probably wouldn't live past twenty." Pat Milton of the As-

sociated Press wrote, "She may live into her twenties with surgery."

Newsday also attached misleading significance to the twenty-year figure: Kerr and Hevesi inaccurately stated that Dr. Albert Butler, chief of neurological surgery at University Hospital, chairman of that department at Stony Brook's medical school, and the only other medical witness, had "agreed with testimony given on Wednesday by Dr. George Newman . . . that Baby Jane Doe would live a life in bed, having to be turned every few hours, even if the operation were performed and she lived to be twenty." In fact, Butler suggested no figures on Baby Jane's life span in testimony, agreeing with Newman only that treatable uncertainties such as urinary infections might shorten it. (Butler did agree with Newman, however, that the final decision regarding surgery should rest with the child's parents.)

She would 'live a life in bed'

Beyond the misleading implication that the child would die prematurely if given surgery (albeit less prematurely than without it), the *Newsday* summary painted a general prognostic consensus where none existed. For example, contrary to *Newsday*'s report that Butler agreed with Newman that Baby Jane would "live a life in bed," Butler actually testified that "as the child aged I don't think it would necessarily mean in the situation the child would be crib-bound. . . . Certainly there are some who are able to get up, sit in a chair or sit in a wheelchair and look around, be aware of their surroundings. . . ."

Butler's testimony also revealed significant wavering in Newman's own predictions. Quoting Newman's original prognosis directly from the medical records, Butler said, "The prognosis offered with appropriate reservation was for probable, number one, walking with bracing. . . ." Except for a minor reference by Barron attributing the walking prediction to one of the parents' legal adversaries, this testimony went unreported. (Newman was never asked, by attorneys or reporters, why he opposed surgery when he made the original prognosis or to explain the discrepancy between that prognosis and the one he presented in court.)

An 'abnormally small' head and no cognition

One widely reported portion of Newman's testimony was his assertion that the child's head at birth "was abnormally small," which gave her "virtually a 100 percent chance of being retarded." Butler, on the other hand, when asked if the circumference of the girl's head was "within normal measurements for a baby of that size," replied that it was. This went unreported.

It would be "unkind" to perform the surgery, said Newman, because, "[o]n the basis of the combinations of the malformations that are present in this child, she is not likely ever to achieve any meaningful interaction with her environment, nor ever to achieve any interpersonal relationships, the very qualities that we consider human. . . ." Newman also asserted, "It's unlikely that she is going to develop any cognitive skills," adding that she would have positive experience of "nothing whatsoever" on the cognitive scale.

Butler's estimate placed the child considerably above this almost vegetative level of existence. He said, "I think we have to reasonably expect that this child might be able to sit up, look around, be aware of parents or good friends. . . ." Holding that, at least to a limited degree, the child would be able to experience emotions such as sadness and joy, Butler again contradicted Newman. And again, it all went unreported. Neither AP's Milton nor Barron of the *Times* even made any mention of Butler, let alone of his substantive disagreements with Newman. *Newsday* cited only those portions of Butler's testimony that were consistent with Newman's, or implied consistency when there was none.

Ordinary care

In his order that the surgery and the shunt procedure be given to the child, later overruled, Tanenbaum isolated yet another, unreported difference between the physicians, this perhaps the most significant of all: Newman twice testified of the surgery that he would "not consider it ordinary care" and, moreover, that "[w]here there are [medical] standards, performing the surgery on this child would *not* be within the accepted standards" (emphasis added). As New-



The antagonists: Linda and Dan A. — their faces darkened to conceal their identity — declined surgery for their daughter, Baby Jane Doe; right-to-life attorney A. Lawrence Washburn (above) demanded that the operation be performed.



man presented it, denying surgery was the only medically acceptable option.

Yet when Butler was asked if the surgery constituted ordinary medical care, he twice affirmed, "In the sense [of] . . . how we most commonly treat an infant who presents with these [sic] group of problems. . . . in that sense in most instances the surgical procedure is performed." Not until nearly three weeks later, in one of the best background stories on the case, did *Newsday's* B. D. Colen become the first even to suggest Butler's dissenting opinions to the public. Noting that Butler had had experience with 350 spina bifida children, Colen reported: "Butler said he favors surgery in cases medically identical to those of Baby Jane Doe because he believes such infants have far more potential than other Stony Brook physicians have predicted for the infant."

Although in his November 9 story Colen failed to make explicit Butler's differences with Newman, it is doubtful that his doing so could have affected hardening public perceptions of the case. By then, New York's highest court had upheld the parents in their decision against surgery, and the Reagan administration was drawing fire from *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* for what the editors viewed as Orwellian "Big Brother" attempts to obtain the child's medical records under the authority of Section 504. Network and print accounts framing the national

story, all the while, were being built upon the original flawed coverage.

Medical dissent

Yet had the press cared to check the detailed courtroom medical descriptions of Baby Jane with outside experts, an entirely different public impression of her case might have developed. One writer who later took such care was columnist Nat Hentoff, whose criticism of medical and press attitudes in the Baby Doe cases have appeared in both *The Washington Post* and *The Village Voice* in recent months. As Hentoff reported, Dr. David G. McLone said after examining the trial transcripts, "If you take our experience of a child [in Baby Jane Doe's described medical condition], I would predict that the child in our hands would have a normal intelligence and would be a community ambulator . . . [walking] probably with some bracing." Chairman of the Professional Advisory Committee of the Spina Bifida Association of America, professor of surgery at Northwestern University Medical School, and chairman of pediatric neurosurgery at Chicago's Children's Memorial Hospital — the national center for spina bifida surgery — McLone has treated over 1,000 children with spina bifida.

Newman said that "within reasonable medical certainty you would predict that the child will be retarded from the [abnormally small head] alone." In an interview with this writer, however,

McLone agreed with Butler that the head was within normal measurements. "Approximately 15 to 20 percent of the children born with spina bifida have a head circumference in [Baby Jane's 31-centimeter] range," he maintains, "and that is perfectly compatible with normal intellectual development." In fact, McLone says, children in that range are among the "very brightest" of individuals with spina bifida.

McLone also dismissed contentions that a child like Baby Jane Doe would be in constant pain. "Pain is not part of this disease," he says. "Of the seven or eight hundred kids we're following, I can't think of a child who's in chronic pain." Moreover, risk of impaired mental development for such a child, according to him, lay not in her physical condition per se, but in the very high possibility of infection within the central nervous system presented by the unrepaired spinal lesion. A meningitis infection that reaches the brain, he says, dramatically increases the prospects for retardation, assuming that the child even survives.

Presented with these views, *Newsday's* Kerr objected that McLone had never actually examined the child or her medical records. While this is true, it is also true that experts such as McLone, removed from courtroom pressures and conflicting loyalties, and working from sworn and detailed medical descriptions

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of the child, were nevertheless the only ones who could possibly have provided some sort of check on the prognoses presented. The press did interview some outside experts for background in the case, but it appears that none was given sufficient information, such as transcripts or thorough recapitulations of the medical testimony, to allow them to formulate an independent opinion.

Compliant obfuscation

Newman testified that if surgery were denied, Baby Jane would probably succumb to infection, with "the likelihood . . . that she would die in a period of about six weeks or so," and with "[v]irtually a 100 percent" chance of death within two years. It was on this basis that Justice Tanenbaum found the child to be "in imminent danger," and ordered what Newman and Butler both regarded as uncomplicated surgery. The issue was treatment versus nontreatment, life-saving surgery versus passive euthanasia, and the press essentially acknowledged this — for a time.

As New York's appellate courts sided with the parents and a federal judge blocked the government's investigative efforts, however, reporters reframed the case: failure to repair the child's spinal lesion was "conservative treatment," not, as the intervenors and Hentoff have maintained, a precedent-setting abrogation of Baby Jane's constitutional and civil rights.

"At first," Hentoff noted, "reporters ascribed the phrase to the doctors and the parents, but soon began to use it on their own as if it were, in terms of this child, an honest part of the English language." Hentoff cited Marcia Chambers's November 18 *New York Times* reference to "the conservative treatment the parents have chosen." *Newsday's* Kerr used another euphemism, writing

that the parents had "opted for alternate treatment."

The press's tilt away from surgery — which Butler and McLone argue to be the norm — was even more obvious in the modifiers used to describe that procedure. In its second story on the case, *Newsday* referred to the treatment sought as "life-saving surgery." After Newman's dark description of Baby Jane had permeated the public mind, however, Kerr adopted his phraseology to explain that legally the child "need not undergo *life-prolonging surgery*" (emphasis added). Variants of this loaded adjective were used on October 21 by Hanrahan and Marques of the *New York Daily News*, Weddle of the *New York Post*, The *New York Times's* Barron, AP (October 22), the editors of *Time* (November 14, 28), CBS's Lesley Stahl (November 6), NBC's Tom Brokaw (November 17), and ABC's Peter Jennings (November 17), among many others.

As the press focused on the tangential anti-abortion convictions of intervenor Washburn, moreover, few beyond *Newsday* noticed that six major disability rights groups, including the Association for Retarded Citizens, the Association for the Severely Handicapped, and the American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, had filed an amicus brief in support of federal civil rights investigators.

Final copy

By September 1984, the Reagan administration had been beaten back by a Second Circuit Court decision that Section 504's civil rights protections were never meant to apply to treatment decisions for disabled newborns, and a district court ruling striking down the Baby Doe rule built on Section 504. *Newsday* had received its Pulitzer, with lead reporter Kerr remarking that Baby Jane's "was a case of outsiders and government

trying to insert themselves into a private tragedy."

Similar interpretations, and virtually all of *Newsday's* reportorial errors, had received prime-time propagation in late-winter and spring segments of CBS's *60 Minutes* (March 11) and ABC's *20/20* (June 7). Reporting that the child (by then known as Keri-Lynn) had gone home, for example, *20/20* blithely declared that "time had affirmed the wisdom of the parents' continuing decision not to operate."

But time, in fact, has affirmed nothing but Baby Jane's surprising physical tenacity. Failure to repair her spinal lesion resulted in the anticipated, potentially lethal meningitis infection, and by November 29, 1983, she was in critical condition. Confronted with legal risks, the parents had already allowed the child to be given antibiotics. She escaped death, but probably not brain damage. Such infection, according to McLone, tends to guarantee that prophecies regarding her mental retardation will be "self-fulfilling."

Faced with a survivor, the doctors and parents eventually chose to shunt the excess fluid from the child's head. The child's spinal lesion, for all that is publicly known, has healed over with scar tissue but remains structurally unrepaired, and thus presumably vulnerable to rupture and further infection.

That the Pulitzer Prize, the highest honor the press bestows on itself, was awarded in connection with a story covered so poorly by the entire trade may ultimately prove instructive. *Newsday* and the rest of the press failed to represent the medical ambiguities in the case, and, arguably, may thus have affected its outcome. Careless coverage of the Baby Jane Doe story, ironically highlighted by the prize, stands as a sober warning to all journalists of the dangers presented by collective imprecision. ■

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Commentator
ABC News

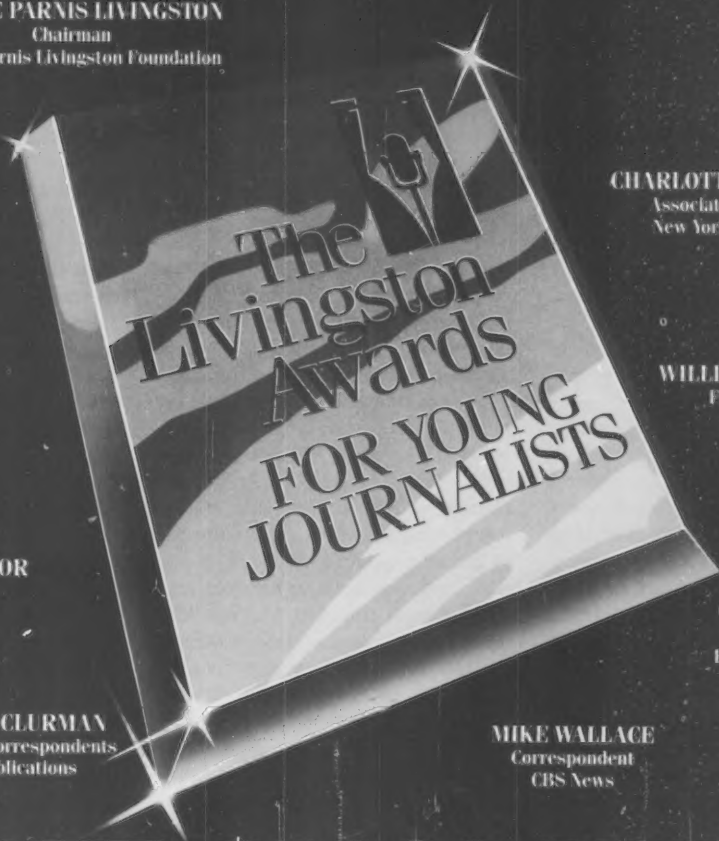
RICHARD M. CLURMAN
Former Chief of Correspondents
Time-Life Publications

CHARLOTTE CURTIS
Associate Editor
New York Times

WILLIAM K. FRIEDMAN
Former Publisher
Illinois Times

GENE ROBERTS
Executive Editor
Philadelphia Inquirer

MIKE WALLACE
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CBS News



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VDT radiation: What's known, what isn't

by LOUIS SLESIN

Video display terminals (VDTs) are now an integral part of the newsroom, and the odds are if you don't work on one now, you soon will. No one knows exactly how many are in use, but the best guess is about ten million. One quick way to get an idea of how important they have become to the American economy is to count the number of VDTs that appear in the ads of a random issue of *The Wall Street Journal*. This morning I found twenty-two — a bumper crop.

As with television sets before them, VDTs have generated widespread concerns about radiation hazards. (A TV and a VDT are basically the same machine, but the VDT can tune in only its host computer, not the afternoon soaps.) The common response to radiation anxiety, especially from employers, is that there is nothing to worry about. As George Cashau, technical director of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, told a congressional hearing last June: "We have tested approximately 1,000 VDTs, and we have never found a radiation emission which even approached the federal standard." These tests, he went on to say, covered both ionizing and nonionizing radiation.

Mr. Cashau is probably right about ionizing radiation, though it is possible for a VDT to emit excessive levels of x-rays. With respect to nonionizing radiation, however, Mr. Cashau needs a refresher course.

First, there are *no* federal standards for the kinds of nonionizing radiation emitted by VDTs. The absence of standards is in large part due to how little we know about the biological effects of this type of radiation. Second, what is known indicates that VDT radiation *may*

have harmful effects. And, third, you cannot measure the nonionizing radiation levels from a VDT in the workplace: it is a difficult business and you need the controlled environment of a laboratory.

The heart of a VDT is a cathode ray tube (CRT). The images on the VDT screen are created by a roving electron beam which activates chemicals called phosphors. The CRT can emit x-rays, though normally these will be absorbed by the tube's glass envelope. It is possible that some units, mainly old sets, could give off unacceptable levels of x-rays, but the vast majority of surveys show that this is not a cause for concern. (Measuring the x-rays is not difficult.)

The nonionizing radiation story is more complicated. Simply put, there are two types of radiation: ionizing and nonionizing. Ionizing radiation is the stronger of the two, with enough energy to strip electrons off atoms, turning them into ions and making them biologically reactive. Ionizing radiation is associated with nuclear bombs and reactors and chest and dental x-rays.

Nonionizing radiation is less powerful but can agitate molecules, causing a heating effect. At low intensities, most scientists now agree, certain types of nonionizing radiation can induce other, nonthermal effects. How it does this and what the biological implications are remain mysterious. Nonionizing radiation is used to broadcast television and radio and satellite communications and is associated with power lines, radar, microwave ovens, and scores of industrial applications.

Contrary to popular belief, VDTs do not emit microwaves. The type of nonionizing radiation they do give off is called very low frequency, or VLF, radiation. The VLF comes from the flyback transformer — the gizmo which moves the CRT's electron beam from left to right and then back to left at the end of each line, much like an automatic carriage return on a typewriter. As it

moves the beam back and forth, it emits pulses of radiation. A standard VDT gives off about 16,000 of these pulses a second, designated 16 kilohertz radiation.

The fact that the radiation is pulsed means that the energy comes in packets, like radar "blips." Because the pulses are so short (a few millionths of a second), standard measuring instruments will yield an average, not a peak, energy value. Moreover, such instruments tell you nothing about the "shape" of the pulses.

An important point is that the flyback transformer is located on the side or at the back of a VDT. Thus, the radiation levels are highest near the flyback, not in front of the screen. This raises the possibility that it is not the operator of a given VDT who is most at risk from VLF radiation, but anyone working near the transformer, perhaps the operator of a neighboring VDT.

Recent measurements of VLF fields from VDTs indicate that there is a similarity between the shape of the pulses from the flyback transformer and those found to be biologically active. Two years ago, members of Dr. José Delgado's laboratory at Centro y Cajal Hospital in Madrid, Spain, discovered that extremely weak levels of pulsed magnetic fields can have dramatic, adverse effects on chick embryos. Subsequent work by Delgado implicates the shape of the pulse as the key variable for causing ill effects.

Tests run in a number of labs show that, in both shape and intensity, the VDT pulses are similar to those that damaged Delgado's chick embryos.

Although Delgado is a respected scientist and his laboratory has an international reputation, researchers have reacted to his findings with extreme skepticism. They cannot understand how such weak radiation could have such devastating effects. Attempts to repeat Delgado's experiments are under way in

Louis Slesin is editor of Microwave News, a monthly, and publisher of VDT News, a bimonthly.

Europe and the U.S.; these may help clarify the nature of the interaction. For now, as one industry expert put it, VLF is the Achilles' heel of the VDT radiation question.

The VDT pulses are also similar to those generated by certain medical devices approved by the Food and Drug Administration and available by prescription to treat hard-to-heal bone fractures — a clear indication that nonthermal effects do exist. But these therapeutic pulses are stronger than those emitted by VDTs.

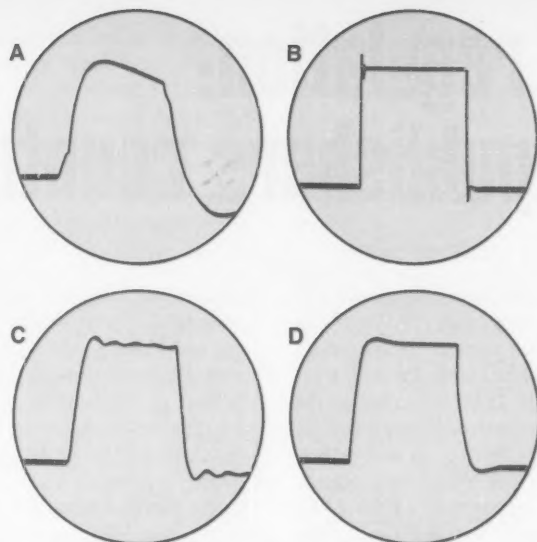
The wild cards in the VDT debate are the eleven clusters of problem pregnancies and miscarriages among women who work on or near VDTs. The clusters have turned up randomly in offices in the U.S. and Canada. In both countries, government and industry officials maintain that these clusters are statistical flukes. Operators and their unions are not so sure.

The "normal" miscarriage rate is relatively high, approaching 20 percent, so it is definitely possible that clusters of miscarriages could have popped up by chance. The incidence of birth defects is harder to account for. But those people who point to chance overlook the fact that all the clusters have been reported by the operators themselves; no one has gone out looking for them.

The obvious questions remain unanswered: Are there more clusters out there? And, if so, how many will it take to satisfy the powers that be that some research is in order?

Basic statistics dictate that if these clusters are indeed random occurrences, they should also show up among office workers without VDTs. (Yes, some people still use typewriters.) No such clusters have been reported. Should we conclude that it takes the fear of VDTs to induce secretaries and clerks to discuss their reproductive problems?

The Delgado effect may turn out to be quite subtle. The abnormal pregnancy clusters could therefore be statistical flukes of a different type: they may show up only in environments where all the criteria for biological action are met. Unlike a toxic chemical that will cause harm



The Delgado effect: The forms shown are of magnetic field pulses. Shape C has no harmful effect; B and D adversely affect chick embryos, as can A at certain intensities. The question is: Are similar VDT pulses biologically active?

if the dose is above some threshold, the efficacy of the radiation may depend on a host of variables, such as the position of the operator in relation to the VDT's flyback transformer.

Facts about VDT radiation have dribbled out very slowly. Canadian researchers, prompted by union concerns, have been far ahead of their American counterparts. Nevertheless, it was only last year that the Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety released a white paper announcing that its staff could not ignore the possibility that VLF radiation had some untoward effects on operators.

In the U.S., the way officials at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) have handled operators' fears about VDTs has aggravated an already tense situation. In November 1982, Dr. Michael Rosenberg, then chief of reproductive health at NIOSH in Cincinnati, Ohio, announced that a study of pregnancy risks would soon be underway. No such study was initiated and in 1983 Rosenberg left NIOSH to join a consulting firm.

After conducting numerous surveys of VDT radiation levels and issuing countless assurances that radiation emissions are not threatening, NIOSH staff members admitted in the spring of 1983 that they could not measure VLF at a job site.

NIOSH's William Murray maintained that there was no problem anyway, because the radiation could not produce significant heating.

A new NIOSH epidemiological study is in the works, but it will take three years to complete after a study population is selected and a questionnaire is cleared by the federal Office of Management and Budget. The latter step alone could take years. Furthermore, because so little is known about how VLF radiation interacts with the human body, epidemiological studies may reveal little new information. After all, if you don't know the right questions to ask, the answers you do get may not mean much.

All the uncertainties have been a source of stress among VDT operators. And therein lies a Catch-22, because stress itself can cause miscarriages. If the clusters are not chance events, it will take some clever studies to untangle stress from radiation effects.

The sad aspect of all this is that shielding a VDT's VLF radiation emissions could, in all likelihood, go a long way toward mitigating the whole problem. Yet now, with employers and employees increasingly polarized on the radiation issue, it seems as unrealistic to expect industry to concede that there may be a hazard as to expect workers to concede that their fears may be groundless. ■

VDT regulation: The publishers counterattack

by LOREN STEIN and DIANA HEMBREE

Newspaper offices today use more than 50,000 video display terminals, more than double the total used in 1981, according to the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA). As labor organizations such as the AFL-CIO and The Newspaper Guild, and women's groups such as 9 to 5, press for legislation designed to establish health and safety standards for the use of VDTs, the publishers are taking countermeasures. The ANPA has joined the Coalition for Workplace Technology, a powerful business and computer manufacturers' lobby. Other newspaper publishers associations have lobbied vigorously against VDT regulation, on both the state and national levels.

The legislation opposed by the industry generally calls for improvements in office and terminal design, as well as operator safeguards. Many of the bills that have been introduced or are now being drawn up require employers to install appropriate lighting and furniture that can be adjusted to assure the user's comfort, as well as anti-glare screens, detachable keyboards (making it possible for users to position themselves as they see fit), and metal shielding against radiation. Some bills call for employers to pay for mandatory eye examinations and computer terminal inspections, and to transfer pregnant employees, upon request, to work that does not involve using a VDT — with no loss in pay, benefits, or seniority. Virtually every bill would require frequent rest breaks.

Most of the VDT safety bills introduced in thirteen states in the last legislative session were killed; the four

watered-down bills that survived — in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Maine — did little more than set up task forces to study and report on evidence of VDT-linked health problems. Legislators, however, predict that safety bills will be introduced in an increasing number of states. Similarly, Claudia James, counsel for the ANPA, believes that VDT legislation is "not going to go away."

The ANPA, which is leading the newspaper industry's fight against VDT regulation, represents nearly 1,400 newspapers, accounting for more than 90 percent of U.S. daily and Sunday circulation. Last June, its technical director, George Cashau, appeared at congressional hearings on VDTs to testify against the need for legislation. Cashau testified that "inaccurate information" about VDTs is responsible for employee fears and called for educational campaigns and further research into VDT office design. (Speaking to the Newspaper Personnel Relations Association in July 1983, Cashau argued that the VDT safety issue was being exploited by groups "looking for shorter work weeks, longer rest breaks, more people hired, or [those] who have something else to gain.") Also testifying on behalf of the ANPA was Dr. Howard R. Brown, medical director of *The New York Times*, who said he was aware of "no medical evidence" of serious VDT-related health effects.

In December of 1983, the ANPA convened a national conference on legislative issues, including VDT bills, for state publishers association managers in Reston, Virginia. There, according to conference materials, Claudia James informed attending managers that the ANPA had met with computer manufacturers and company officials from automated businesses, including airlines and banks, to propose the creation of an industry group to deal with VDT prob-

lems. A key purpose of the group, James said, "would be to provide greater credibility for business positions in dealing with the media and state legislators."

Shortly after this conference, the Computer and Business Equipment Manufacturers Association, which represents forty-two of the largest computer and business equipment manufacturers in the U.S., formed a massive lobby to fight VDT legislation and, according to Charlotte LeGates, director of communications for CBEMA, "to correct the misinformation [about VDTs] being circulated by the press and by word of mouth." The Coalition for Workplace Technology, as this new lobbying group was called, quickly enlisted twenty-two national trade associations, including the ANPA, in its battle against VDT regulation.

"The ANPA has been a very active member [of the coalition]," says LeGates, who is also the spokesperson for the CWT. Other members include the American Insurance Association, the American Bankers Association, the American Electronics Association, the Air Transport Association of America, and the Printing Industries of America. To date, the lobbying group, which is based in Washington, D. C., has claimed credit for blocking the majority of the proposed VDT bills this year. "We're very pleased," says LeGates. "Legislators have been highly responsible and will allow themselves to be persuaded by the facts."

The ANPA and other coalition members meet for monthly strategy sessions at CBEMA headquarters in Washington, D. C., and requests for coalition literature on VDT health issues are met with CBEMA pamphlets. CBEMA officials also direct the coalition's networking and lobbying activities.

CBEMA president and coalition-founder Vico Henriques argues that "there are no health issues [connected

Loren Stein is an associate at the Center for Investigative Reporting in San Francisco; Diana Hembree is the director of the center's "Women in the 80s" project.

with VDT use]; there are comfort issues." The coalition is particularly emphatic that radiation emitted from VDTs is a "non-issue." Protecting pregnant operators from VDTs, LeGates told a *Wall Street Journal* reporter, "is like protecting them from light bulbs. It's like employees saying, 'The office is filled with cosmic rays and we need to fight them with balloons.'"

The coalition's argument is echoed by many publishers. "We're simply saying there is no scientific evidence" of VDT-related health problems, says ANPA vice-president of industry and public affairs Robert Burke. John D. Kutzer of the New York State Publishers Association has testified that VDT bills would "protect people from nonexistent maladies," and publisher Dale Barker, representing the Illinois Press Association, has gone a step further. In a hearing on an Illinois VDT bill last April she conceded that tedium is a problem for many operators, adding, "Unfortunately many jobs are tedious. What this bill plainly attempts to do is simply legislate work out of the workplace. Is the next step a law to say that no worker can go home more tired than when he arrived?"

Publishers and many other employers have also argued that implementation of the VDT bills' provisions would be very costly. Criticizing California state assemblyman Tom Hayden's VDT bill — a version of which was voted down by the assembly last June — Mike Dorais, general manager of the California Newspaper Publishers Association, argued that "newspaper publishers are not unsympathetic or uncaring employers . . . but it's unreasonable to ask newspapers that have invested in state-of-the-art equipment to replace them all."

Many publishers are also worried about possible product-liability lawsuits over VDTs, according to Loren Ghiglione, editor and publisher of the Southbridge, Massachusetts, *News*. "At publishers' meetings, lawyers caution not to include VDT health risks in employee handbooks because it will be used against you [in court]. It's a tough one," says Ghiglione. He reports that some publishers,

for example, are reluctant to provide radiation shielding because they fear that such actions are tantamount to accepting liability for possible VDT flaws. (Legally, an employer cannot be held responsible for an employee's being injured by a flawed product unless the employer used the product incorrectly or knew or should have known that the product was defective.)

The Newspaper Guild, which has lobbied heavily for VDT legislation, is a frequent target of publishers in their campaign against VDT regulation. The ANPA's James has warned that the supporters of such legislation "are serious and determined, among them The Newspaper Guild, whose members write the news stories on this issue." Publisher Dale Barker of Illinois has testified that the Guild, having failed to get "these grossly featherbedding [VDT] provisions into local contracts . . . , turned to the legislative arena, using fear and ignorance to create something of a panic." Other publishers have charged that some unions are using the VDT safety issue to gain influence: VDT legislation "is believed to be organized labor's subtle way of expanding operations to unorganized businesses, especially Hi-Tech where it has made little progress," warned a 1982 *Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association Bulletin*. Another common argument is that any Guild demands for better working conditions belong on the bargaining table.

Responding to such charges, the Guild's research director, David Eisen, contends that the Guild supports legislation less on behalf of its own members than on behalf of "the vast majority of VDT operators who are not protected by unions." (Only 16.3 percent of all clerical workers are represented by unions, according to the latest available statistics.) Eisen notes that the Guild has had some success in negotiating VDT safeguards in its labor contracts: 35 out of 200 newspapers, for example, have agreed to Guild demands for mandatory eye examinations. Testifying before a congressional subcommittee last year, however, Eisen charged that many publishers have put up "plenty of resistance to improving conditions that . . . from a health standpoint [are] nothing short of outrageous."

Meanwhile, in some states, newspa-

per industry lobbying threatens to spill over into the newsroom. In Massachusetts, for example, which has a thriving computer industry, the state newspaper publishers association has instructed its members that stories on VDT legislation should be "carefully screened" prior to publication.

"Unions, particularly the 9 to 5 organization, have been distributing propaganda conjuring up all kinds of perils to the safety of operators, and some of the information is being fed to young reporters who do not understand all of the elements involved in the dispute," warned the June 1, 1984, *MNPA Bulletin*. "The ambition of young reporters to achieve a page-one by-line by stretching or embellishing the facts is ever present and the consequences can cause serious damage. Misinterpretation of facts and statements is also dangerous, especially to business interests."

Contacted about the MNPA statement, Matthew Storin, managing editor of *The Boston Globe*, said that management at the *Globe* had never screened articles on VDT bills. He had not previously seen the MNPA advisory, but after it was read to him over the telephone, he commented, "I don't like it, and I don't think [the statement] shows much faith in the editing process. VDT stories should not be treated any differently from any other group of stories."

Have Massachusetts publishers elsewhere heeded the MNPA instructions? James Hopson, publisher of *The Middlesex News* in Framingham, says that his reporters' stories on VDT bills are brought to his attention before publication, adding, "I don't think it's bad policy for publishers to be aware of what's printed about this issue. It's an explosive workplace issue." Other Massachusetts publishers interviewed say they are adamantly opposed to prepublication screening. Asked if he screens articles on VDT legislation before they go to press, *Cape Cod Times* publisher Scott Himstead said, in a typical reply: "Heavens no. Our writers have absolute freedom to cover the pros and cons [of the VDT issue] as they see fit."

Whether any publishers have actually

influenced coverage of VDT issues in Massachusetts, then, is debatable. What is clear is that, in a number of states, editorials have opposed the passage of VDT bills — without mentioning the publishers' financial stake in the issue. In Ohio, for example, the February 13, 1984, *Columbus Dispatch* made a stinging attack on the state VDT bill, which called for free eye examinations, rest breaks, and transfer of pregnant employees, among other provisions, in an editorial titled "Assault on VDTs":

It's a good thing that some of the present members of the Ohio General Assembly weren't around when the pencil was invented. Had they been, the world's most basic writing instrument might today come equipped with a tip safety shield with see-through visor, work gloves, protective eyeglasses, ear-shields, and an anti-chew guard. And it would, of course, contain no lead and be made of splinter-free material. All of this would have been done in the name of "operator safety."

Well, the doodlers and scribblers were spared this nonsense, but the users of the world's current basic writing instrument — the video display terminal — may not be so lucky.

The editorial called for the defeat of the Ohio bill, noting derisively, "We did, after all, survive the pencil." The *Dispatch* is a member of the Ohio Newspaper Association, which lobbied against the now-stalled bill.

Although some newspapers, including the *San Jose Mercury News*, the *Portland Oregonian*, and *The Boston Globe*, have covered the comparatively uncontroversial subject of work-station design, or ergonomics, many appear to have neglected coverage of possible VDT radiation hazards. One story overlooked by most U. S. newspapers was that of a Canadian scientist's finding that low-frequency radiation — not x-rays — may pose hazards for VDT users. In January 1983, Dr. Karel Marha and other scientists at the Canadian Center for Occupational Safety and Health measured "relatively strong" very-low-frequency radiation emissions near the transformers of some VDTs and suggested a link might exist between pulsed VLF emissions and the clusters of birth defects and miscarriages reported at eleven VDT work sites in Canada and the U.S. A computer search of five major U.S. newspapers (*The New York Times*, *The*

Washington Post, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and the *Los Angeles Times*) and the two principal wire services revealed that none had mentioned the Canadian finding.

Terry Pristin, an assistant metropolitan editor at the *Los Angeles Times*, says that her impression is that there has been "very little coverage of VDT radiation, especially about the possible effects of radiation on pregnancy. This distresses me."

If coverage of VDT radiation issues is scant, as would appear to be the case, this may be, as Mike Dorais of the California Newspaper Publishers Association maintains, simply because "the topic doesn't interest people because the technology is relatively new." On the other hand, it may reflect the difficulty reporters have in getting accurate information on the subject. This is the position held by Paul Brodeur, a *New Yorker* writer and the author of *The Zapping of America*, a book on the hazards of microwave radiation. Brodeur charges that the electronics industry and the Defense Department have a record of manipulating and suppressing information on the health hazards posed by nonionizing radiation that is vital to the VDT safety debate, thus making it difficult for the press to get the full story on the issue.

It was Brodeur who called the writers' attention to the existence of a group in some ways similar to the Coalition for Workplace Technology by providing a 1982 document announcing a private meeting of industry officials and representatives of the broadcast media to debate solutions to the public's growing "irrational fear of radiation" emitted by power lines, VDTs, broadcast towers, and home appliances. The invitation blamed this fear largely on public misinformation due to "irresponsible behavior by a few individuals in both the media and professional communities."

The meeting, the second in a series of annual seminars on radio-frequency radiation, was cosponsored by the Electronic Industries Association (also a member of the Coalition for Workplace Technology), the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers, and the National Association of Broadcasters. The

meeting was closed to the press "to permit a free exchange of thoughts on this sensitive subject"; cameras and recording devices were proscribed for the same reason. According to the invitation, the purpose of the seminar was to restore "rational attitudes" and "preserve the health of U.S. electrical technology" in areas of public education, regulation, scientific research, and product-liability law. These associations have since formed a lobbying group called the Electromagnetic Energy Policy Alliance.

A similar call was subsequently sounded by CBEMA president Henriques, who testified on Capitol Hill that "while the safety of the [VDT] equipment has not changed, there is an element in today's workplace that has changed. Today we have fear. And it is fear that comes from a very rapid change in our way of conducting work and our lives. It comes, too, from some zealous and self-interested parties who create fear for their own benefit."

To Henriques, one of the "self-interested parties" is apparently the press. "Newspaper headlines scream the accusation that women using visual displays have had miscarriages," he said in his testimony. "The truth is relegated to one inch on an inside page several days later." (Henriques did not name specific newspapers.)

To counter the press's alleged misinformation on VDT hazards and also to counter the threat of VDT legislation, CBEMA has mounted a multimillion-dollar public relations program on VDT health and safety. The media campaign will distribute video news clips and public-service announcements to radio and television stations, and an industry-sponsored series of question-and-answer columns on VDT safety will appear in newspapers throughout the country this fall. The association also offers training programs for computer operators and management, accompanied by a videotape featuring scientists who, according to Henriques, "explain clearly and concisely that there is no health and safety danger [from terminals]."

It will be interesting to see how reporters, confronted by this publisher-supported media blitz, cover a story of importance to the nation's estimated 10 million users of VDTs. ■



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SOME.
A FEW.

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Can you name that agent?

A look at how the Intelligence Identities Protection Act works

by JAY PETERZELL

A noted constitutional scholar called it "the clearest violation of the First Amendment attempted by Congress in this era." Every major press group denounced it as a threat to aggressive reporting of intelligence and foreign policy matters.

Two years ago, when the Intelligence Identities Protection Act made it a crime to reveal the names of U.S. intelligence agents, the press had good reason to worry. Particularly disturbing was a section of the law that punishes disclosures by reporters and others outside the government. Although a congressional conference report said that this section should apply only to those "in the business of 'naming names,'" the ambiguity of that protection — and the possibility that the administration would ignore it — failed to comfort critics of the legislation.

In the two years since the law passed, however, its feared effects on the press have not materialized. Articles and books continue to identify employees of the Central Intelligence Agency and the agency's current or former agents abroad. There have been no prosecutions. The administration has thus far accepted the interpretation spelled out by Congress.

"It certainly does not bar the publication of a name in the newspaper," comments Patricia Volz, a spokeswoman for the CIA. "The effect of the act as far as we're concerned is that it stopped *Covert Action Information Bulletin* from publishing lists of agents. But as far as stopping names from appearing in articles, no, the act does not do that." The editors of *Covert Action*, a magazine

that used to list the names and biographies of CIA employees, announced before the law passed that they were suspending the practice.

The Justice Department is responsible for initiating prosecutions under the act, but would normally do so only when a violation is reported by the CIA. "The legislative intent as expressed in the conference report would be guidance to enforcement," comments a senior official who declined to be identified. He notes that Justice Department policy requires the attorney general's approval before any member of the news media is indicted. The policy states that the government's power to prosecute "should not be used in such a way that it impairs a reporter's responsibility to cover as broadly as possible controversial public issues."

The most persuasive evidence that reporters are not exposed to prosecution, however, is not to be found in official statements but in the record of disclosures during the past two years. Many of these clearly embarrassed the government or interfered with continuing intelligence operations. For example:

□ In March, *The New York Times* reported that the head of El Salvador's Treasury Police, Colonel Nicolás Caranza, had received more than \$90,000 a year from the CIA since the late 1970s. The Treasury Police are believed by U.S. officials to be implicated in death-squad activities.

□ Expanding on this and other accounts, *The Christian Science Monitor* reported in May that the CIA finances El Salvador's National Intelligence Agency. Headed by Colonels Rinaldo Goelcher and Gabriel Contreras, who were described as being in "regular contact with the CIA station chief," the agency was said to routinely torture and murder suspected leftists during interrogation.

□ The leaders of Nicaraguan exile groups armed and financed by the CIA are "covert agents" as defined by the new law. Almost every newspaper in the country has identified them.

□ In early 1983, *The New York Times* described the activities of Alfred J. Bühler, a European businessman and al-

leged CIA "bagman" said to have assisted the agency in a variety of operations. In return, Bühler had been shielded by the CIA from questioning by U.S. law enforcement agencies about illegal activities.

□ In June, *Time* magazine revealed that Afghan resistance leader Ahmad Shah Massoud operates in close tactical coordination with the CIA. On the basis of U.S. satellite photographs, the agency had warned Massoud of an impending Soviet offensive this spring, and had rushed land mines and communications equipment to the guerrilla leader to help him respond to the planned attack.

□ In two articles this year, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported that former Cambodian prime minister Son Sann, and possibly former head of state Norodom Sihanouk, were receiving CIA funds in their guerrilla war against the current government of Cambodia.

□ In 1982, *The Wall Street Journal* investigated the role of current and former CIA agents in financial scams and drug deals involving the Nugan Hand bank in Australia. More recently, the paper reported the collapse of a CIA-linked firm in Hawaii that had allegedly swindled innocent investors. In both cases, agents' names were named.

The authors of many of these articles, and of other articles that identify CIA agents, say they were not intimidated by the new law. "It will not affect me until either an editor asks me to take something out or I get indicted," says Jonathan Kwitny of *The Wall Street Journal*. "So far, neither has happened."

But there is uncertainty among the journalists about whether the act applies to them at all. Most say they think it does not. One reporter, however, who asked not to be identified, describes an article he wrote as a deliberate effort to challenge the law.

Perhaps the most important effect of the conference report is in helping to resolve doubts when questions about the act arise. Lawyers for several papers, including *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and *The Christian Sci-*

Jay Peterzell is a research associate at the Center for National Security Studies, in Washington, D.C.

ence Monitor, say the report convinced them that the law does not cover journalists who disclose the names of agents in news stories.

Only one instance could be found in which a name seemed to have been withheld because of concern about the law. In *The Christian Science Monitor* article cited above, which describes CIA links with death squads in El Salvador, reporter Dennis Volman wrote that American advisers to the country's intelligence agencies "have met regularly at 10 at night in a flower shop in San Salvador with a U.S. Embassy official. . . . The *Monitor* has been given his name, but will not publish it. There are legal prohibitions on naming possible U.S. CIA agents."

Volman says that both he and the paper's lawyers at first thought the act barred publication of the name. Shortly after receiving Volman's article, however, the *Monitor's* legal department had checked the law and the legislative history, and called back to advise him that identifying the official would raise no legal issue. "When we checked the law, what it said was that you can't publish lists," Volman adds. "That's how we interpreted it." In the end, the *Monitor* decided not to print the name for moral rather than legal reasons. The reference to the identities law was allowed to stand, partly to indicate that the official in question was an intelligence officer.

Even *Covert Action Information Bulletin* and *Counterspy*, another magazine that used to list CIA employees, were less affected by the law than they had expected. "It hasn't inhibited us from publishing the magazine," says *Covert Action's* co-editor, Louis Wolf. "It has only stopped us from printing the 'Naming Names' column. On several occasions we have published articles that discussed CIA activities and identified people when it was important to the story. We got legal advice and went ahead."

Wolf's caution in part reflects an ambiguity in the law. The key provision that affects reporters is a ban on identifying undercover personnel "in the course of a pattern of activities intended to identify and expose covert agents." As interpreted by the conference report, a discloser breaks the law only if his intent is to expose agents and not, for example,

to report events of news or historical interest. "A journalist writing stories about the CIA would not be engaged in the requisite 'pattern of activities,'" the report notes, "even if the stories he wrote included [the names of] one or more covert agents, unless the government proved that there was an intent to identify and expose agents. To meet the standard of the bill, a discloser must be engaged in a purposeful enterprise of revealing identities."

Not bad; but it also means reporters are not necessarily exempt from the law. For the conference report does not really distinguish between lists and articles — or reporters and propagandists — but between cases in which the purpose is to expose secret agents and those in which exposure is a "side effect" of some other activity. That line may not always

be easy to draw. A future administration could take a stricter view of disclosures than that currently held by the CIA.

For the present, however, reporters are not affected by the act and need not be concerned by it. And the remaining ambiguity of the law is not likely to be resolved soon. Press and civil liberties groups have decided not to challenge it in a civil suit and risk an unfavorable Supreme Court ruling. The administration, for its part, says it has no plans to prosecute journalists who identify agents in news articles. And magazines that used to print lists of CIA employees no longer do so. Thus far, the identities protection act has had no other inhibiting effect on the press. It appears, then, to belong to that class of symbolic laws which accomplish their purpose merely by being enacted. ■



LETTER FROM ISRAEL



Jean-Pierre Laffont/Sygma



hen Israel Television reported on election night last July that the Labor party was winning by a very slim margin — in contrast to earlier forecasts that Labor would make a strong comeback — a Likud Knesset (Parliament) member cried out at the newscaster on the screen: “Why are you so sad, so sad? You find it difficult to tolerate the results, don’t you?”

Israel Television was not alone in underestimating the popular strength of the conservative Likud party; most Israeli news organizations made the same mistake. “One can be born and raised in this country, practice journalism, and not know, apparently, what’s happening under your nose,” wrote commentator Amnon Abramovitz of the daily *Ma’ariv*.

Indeed, as many columnists were quick to observe, the Israeli media were among the major losers in these elections. According to Dr. Hertzl Rosenbloom of the daily *Yediot Ahronot*, one of the few journalists who sympathized with the Likud, people read the “press pogrom” against the Likud — “the venom and the poison,” as Rosenbloom

put it — “and threw it all into the wastebasket.”

Israeli newspapers, television, and radio are courageous, open-minded, and combative — and more liberal than the average citizen. Journalists here, not innocent of a supercilious streak, often perceive themselves as guardians of the public good as they bang away at their manual typewriters, usually situated in small rooms along lengthy corridors. They write with more bite than their American counterparts, and in their frequent crusades the borderline between fact and opinion is occasionally blurred. They regularly rock the fragile boat of Israel, or so it seems to many of its apprehensive and often resentful passengers. According to a survey published in the magazine *Monitin* last April, 56 percent of the adult Jewish population in Israel think the mass media “are harmful to national interests” and should therefore be restrained.

Yet despite the fact that the media had little effect on last summer’s elections, their influence on the political system is marked. Since Knesset members do not enjoy large staffs, most of their legislative queries and motions are based on media reports, according to Knesset member Shevah Weiss, professor of political science at Haifa University. In the higher echelons the situation is more complex. On the one hand, in order to advance their own interests, politicians regularly leak to the press detailed stories from closed cabinet meetings and

by DORIT PHYLLIS GARY

from debates of the Knesset’s Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. On the other, the familial — although not necessarily congenial — relationship that the press formed with the government when Labor was in power was shaken during the seven years of Likud rule. The constant battles with an inexperienced, remote, and suspicious regime, which became increasingly hostile and insensitive to mounting criticism, helped the media to cut the umbilical cord that bound them to the government and achieve an unprecedented degree of independence. This is especially marked in the area of military-strategic reporting and analysis. Likud Defense Minister Ariel Sharon’s antagonism toward the media — to the point that he tried to prevent their access to areas of tension, including Lebanon at the outset of the war in 1982 — provoked an unparalleled surge of investigative reporting that helped to turn Israeli public opinion against involvement in Lebanon.

Seventeen different dailies are published in this tiny state of fewer than 4,500,000 citizens (see sidebar). About 86 percent of the adult population say they read a daily paper and 21 percent say they read more than one paper on weekends. Israelis also watch a lot of television news, but this does not lead them to identify with its liberal and an-

Dorit Phyllis Gary, who divides her time between Israel and the U.S., has written for both U.S. and Israeli publications, including Ma’ariv and Ha’aretz.

tigovernment point of view. Indeed, television often creates an adverse reaction, says Shlomo Aronson, professor of political science at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

According to Aronson, the abrasive style of television interviewers, who are mostly Ashkenazim (Jews of European origin), who constitute Israel's upper class) is interpreted by many members of the general public (55 percent of whom are Sephardim — of Middle Eastern origin) as patronizing. This year several interviewers even managed, inadvertently, to boost the national comeback of Sharon, whom television had helped to drive from the defense ministry in 1983. On the eve of elections within his party last spring, they chose to interview Sharon — a political dead-weight at that point — in a *Face the Nation*-style program. Sharon, who is himself notorious for his abrasiveness, imitated — says Aronson — the style that former Prime Minister Menachem Begin had so successfully adopted: he was tough without appearing obnoxious, and came across as an underdog hounded by bellicose interviewers.

As a result of the anti-establishment style of Israel Television, all governments, Likud and Labor alike, have perceived it as an adversary. Moreover, they have all tried to meddle in its affairs, taking advantage of the fact that television and radio in Israel are under the control of a public corporation (Israel Broadcasting Authority), whose chairman and director general are government appointees who sometimes act as guardians of the interests of the political parties to which they belong. But Labor interfered less than Likud, which, despite the pugnacious spirit of Israel Television's employees, managed in one way or another to neutralize some of its most talented journalists, who happened to be identified with the political left. Satire is out. Sports, nature, and entertainment programs — many of them imported — are abundantly in. Domestic programs increasingly emphasize religious and patriotic themes.

In addition, the coverage of controversial issues — such as the future of the territories Israel occupied on the West Bank of the Jordan in 1967 — is shrinking. During the past few years, interviews with public figures identified

with the PLO have been limited. Violent encounters between Jews and Arabs on the West Bank are usually reported by the newscaster but not shown on the screen, so that their emotional impact is reduced. Reporters have been forbidden to use the terms "West Bank" or "the territories" and must resort to the biblical equivalents, Judea and Samaria. When a Jewish terrorist group was uncovered last spring, the news division wanted to interview a West Bank leader whom the terrorists were suspected of having maimed. According to Rafik Halabi, the division's deputy editor, the idea was rejected by Director General Uri Porat, who argued that what the Arabs think of the Jewish underground movement is not of utmost importance. Even the coverage of funerals of soldiers killed in Lebanon has been modified: closeups of grieving relatives have been barred during the past year, says Halabi.

And yet no government has been able to manipulate the evening news — watched by 90 percent of television viewers — to present a party line. On August 12, for example, at a time when the pro-settlement Likud party still headed the government, the half-hour program included a segment on Labor leader Shimon Peres, who assailed the founding of a new Jewish settlement in the heart of the Arab city of Hebron on the West Bank. Israeli artists were shown in a Palestinian refugee camp protesting the arrest of a local Palestinian artist for painting nationalist art using the colors of the PLO flag. The Israeli involvement in Lebanon was portrayed with the usual negative slant in a segment featuring the stories of two recently injured soldiers. The government's economic policies were not spared criticism either: the same newscast included items that dealt with Israel's 400 percent inflation, a 20 percent rise in the number of unemployed since June, and a warning by Israeli industrialists that harmful government policies would cause Israeli factories to relocate abroad. After half an hour of such disasters, who could resist the comparatively placid spectacle of J.R. setting in motion a crooked oil deal from his South Fork mansion? *Dallas* is, in fact, a big hit in Israel.

Two armed security guards stand at the entrance to the Israel Television building

in Jerusalem. One might wonder whether they are there to protect Jews against Arabs or Jews against Jews. Television has been mired in strikes and is often described as being in an advanced stage of disintegration. In addition to political infighting, it has been crippled by an insufficient budget, inefficient management, and abundant red tape. Many media observers agree that the best way to overcome the problem would be to close it down, dismiss the employees — most of whom are in tenured positions — and make a fresh start. Some say that commercials, which have been barred up to now, should be permitted in order to increase the budget. A second, competing channel has also been mentioned as necessary for revitalization. And many insiders point out the obvious: the Israel



Pas de deux:

Israeli political commentary is free-swinging and irreverent. This election-campaign caricature appeared last summer on the cover of the weekly newsmagazine Koteret Rashit.

Broadcasting Authority should be depoliticized.

Despite its usually feisty spirit, television did not play an active role in last spring's campaign, since it was barred by law from showing or discussing the candidates and their platforms during the one hundred days before the July 23 elections. The print media, by contrast, took an aggressive stand against Likud. The daily *Ha'aretz*, often included in

lists of the world's best papers, preached, as ever, to the choir. Its readers are mostly university graduates — the country's social and cultural elite, many of whom identify with Labor. It is not popular among the masses and its circulation is small — 30,000 daily and 70,000 on Fridays. (All circulation figures given in this article were provided by the newspapers — independent circulation audits are not customary in Israel.)

An independent liberal paper, *Ha'aretz* is more dovish on security and foreign policy than the general public. It strongly opposes Jewish settlements on the West Bank. It regularly exposes matters that the public would rather not face — such as the volatile relations between neighboring Arabs and Jews around the country. Attacking the religious parties for their attempts to force restrictions on the secular majority is another *Ha'aretz* staple.

Ha'aretz is often referred to as "the Israeli *New York Times*," because of its general excellence. Yet the difference between the two is readily apparent. In style and tone, for example, the papers differ as much as the tempestuous Israelis contrast with the more reserved Americans. After election night last summer, to take but one example, *Ha'aretz*'s fine columnist Yoel Marcus

CJR/Yacov Agor



Family enterprise I: Noah Mozes (right) is editor and publisher of the mass-circulation daily *Yediot Ahronot*, described by a competitor as having "an uncanny sense of what the street wants to read." Noah's cousin, Dov Yudkowski, is managing editor; the paper has been in the family since Noah's father, Yehuda (portrait) bought it in 1940.

wrote that "the results look as if they have been masterminded by Satan more than by the Almighty," and claimed that in forming a new government Israelis would have to choose "between the plague and cholera."

Publisher and editor Gershom Schocken dismisses the comparison be-

tween his paper and the *Times* with an amused smile. "The *New York Times*'s resources enable it to provide coverage of events worldwide," he says. "It would be ridiculous to compare a twelve- to fourteen-page paper with limited resources to a newspaper that publishes close to a hundred pages daily." Schocken, whose complete baldness accentuates an impish look, is dressed in casual gray clothes and is seated in a modest office that looks only slightly less austere than the paper's gray, two-story building. As editor of *Ha'aretz* since 1939, Schocken has developed a reputation as a tough patriarch and a wide-ranging intellectual who determines the political and economic line of the paper himself.

Some journalists claim that *Ha'aretz* is currently stronger on analysis than on newsgathering. In recent years, they contend, the paper's relations with the government have been so bad that its reporters have suffered from lack of access to inside information.

With one important exception: *Ha'aretz* was instrumental in forecasting and reporting the real aim of Israel's controversial invasion of Lebanon, in exposing the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee-camp massacres, and in instigating the investigation that led to the

Not everybody reads the Hebrew press

Israel's dailies include many foreign-language newspapers that cater to the needs of the country's vast immigrant population and its 700,000 Arab citizens. Perhaps the most significant among them is the English-language *Jerusalem Post* (circulation: 24,000 daily and 41,000 on Fridays). This Zionist daily of solid reputation is widely quoted around the world; most foreign correspondents based in Israel do not read Hebrew and therefore rely on it as a major source of information. The *Post*'s readership is diverse — from foreign diplomats stationed in Israel to Jews worldwide; from American Jewish immigrants, who are among the settlers of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, to the region's Arab intelligentsia.

Among Israeli Arabs, the Hebrew

evening papers *Ma'ariv* and *Yediot Ahronot* are popular. Less in demand is the Arab-language daily *Al-Anba* ("The News"), which purveys the official government line. Also available are three small dailies published in East Jerusalem which campaign for an independent Palestinian state (see "Report from the West Bank," *CJR*, November/December 1981). A few Israeli Arabs subscribe to papers from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Lebanon, and even to PLO publications which they receive through Cyprus.

The Jewish state's Hebrew and Arabic radio and television are an important source of news for Israeli Arabs, who also listen to and watch programs from Arab countries; Jordanian TV, which offers a wide variety of quality shows, enjoys special popularity.

D. P. G.

resignation of Defense Minister Sharon. Military correspondent Ze'ev Schiff and journalists from several other papers succeeded in turning many Israelis against the war. Only two years later, however, it seems that their influence on the generation that will mold the nation's future has been relatively slight: soldiers and the young in general gave their votes to Likud — the party that got Israel into the war in Lebanon — in larger numbers than the general population.

Most Israelis read one or the other of the two rival evening papers, *Yediot Ahronot* and *Ma'ariv* (circulation 185,000 and 150,000 respectively on weekdays; 380,000 and 250,000 on Fridays), which actually reach the newsstands in the early morning hours. Their style is lighter than *Ha'aretz*'s, their print larger, and their layouts brighter. In the 1970s both adopted the format of many American newspapers and today they have large and effervescent lifestyle, sports, business, and entertainment sections. *Ma'ariv*, however, has always had a more restrained and conservative tone than *Yediot Ahronot* and it devotes less space to sex and crime. People who read *Ma'ariv* are generally older and better educated than those who read *Yediot*. Both publications place a strong emphasis on domestic rather than international news, and when reporting from abroad they tend to be very ethnocentric: if a Jewish doctor on the other side of the world loses his job and blames it on anti-Semitism, they will report it. And any insignificant robbery in New York is news if the thieves use Israeli-manufactured arms.

Yediot Ahronot is located in an elegant modern building with a light-marble exterior and an art-filled dark-marble lobby. The people responsible for the success of this family enterprise are publisher and editor Noah Mozes and managing editor Dov Yudkowski, who are cousins. Yudkowski, pleasant and soft-spoken yet firm ("a shark in gefilte-fish skin," the monthly magazine *Monitin* called him), claims that the secret of their success is an ability "to produce a newspaper that is popular among the masses and intellectuals alike, while most papers try to reach only a certain segment of the population."

Yediot has an uncanny sense of what the street wants to read, says Eliahu Sal-

peter, a member of the editorial board of *Ha'aretz*. Its headlines and articles are catchy and lively, with an emphasis on investigative reporting. "Even complex issues are presented in simple language that everyone can understand," explains silver-haired Noah Mozes, whose desk faces a stately portrait of his father, Yehuda, who bought the fledgling paper in 1940.

It was Mozes and Yudkowski who abandoned the sectarianism that characterized many Israeli newspapers after the country achieved independence in 1948 and opened *Yediot* to all opinions, a tradition jealously preserved to this day. Last August 10, for example, columnist Eliahu Amikam wrote a somber piece interpreting President Reagan's plan for Palestinian autonomy on the West Bank as a call for the establishment of a de facto Palestinian state that would inevitably lead to a new version of the war in Lebanon — only much closer to Tel Aviv. The same issue's "PLO page," nicknamed for its leftist writers, featured Israel's best satirist, Amos Kenan, who, with mocking bitterness, called for the division of the Jewish state between its

two nations: let the Likud receive lands occupied by Israel in the Six Day War and let pre-1967 Israel be under Labor rule.

Ma'ariv, on the other hand, has demonstrated since its founding in 1948 a more clearly defined nationalist line. Last winter, for example, when *Ma'ariv* reported the results of a poll on the future of the West Bank, its headline stressed that 43 percent of those Israelis who were questioned opposed relinquishing the lands Israel conquered from Jordan in the 1967 war. The deck of the headline noted that 3.2 percent favored surrendering the territories as part of a peace plan with Jordan. This underplayed the fact that the majority — 53.6 percent — supported a territorial compromise. Occasionally, the paper's nationalistic bent can be helpful in obtaining scoops: this year *Ma'ariv* published exclusive interviews with suspected members of a Jewish underground group that had been set up to terrorize Arabs.

Like most newspapers in Israel, *Ma'ariv* is published in Tel Aviv, where it occupies a utilitarian five-story building. Its editor-in-chief, Shmuel Schnitzer, is a veteran columnist and was one of the paper's founders. A be-



CJR/Yaacov Agor

Family enterprise II: Gershom Schocken (seated) is editor and publisher of *Ha'aretz*, often called the Israeli New York Times. With family backing, his son, Amos (standing), earlier this year founded *Hadashot*, a breezy tabloid which annoyed some of its competitors last spring by picking what they saw as an ill-considered fight with the Israeli censors.

spectacled, scholarly looking man, he sits in his spacious, book-filled office and explains *Ma'ariv's* standing softly but didactically: "We have had quite an influence on the government because we are perceived as an objective paper, not as hostile as some others. This year we had a great deal of influence on Yoram Aridor's resignation as finance minister. All the newspapers wrote against him, but our criticism was considered more objective and matter-of-fact."

Israeli readers, however, do not buy a paper for its political line. *Yediot Aharonot*, which is often characterized as "a supermarket of opinions," is read, according to a survey by the Israeli Association of Advertisers, by 64 percent of all newspaper readers. Those papers associated with political parties, such as Labor's excellent daily, *Davar*, have only a minute readership. Likud has had to close its newspapers for lack of readers. And the veteran leftist magazine *Haolam Haze*, which contributed to the growing recognition by Israelis of the centrality of the Palestinian problem, probably survives today mainly because of its stories on sex and crime and its investigations of corruption.

Israel's youngest daily, *Hadashot*, which is aimed at the masses, refrains from writing editorials, and its columnists are of all political shades. The paper, which was started this year by Amos Schocken, the son of *Ha'aretz's* publisher, has been accused of yellow journalism by some editors, but its contents are much more substantial than the phrase would suggest. *Hadashot* does, however, appear in tabloid format and it carries many short, colorful stories, some of which do have a yellowish tinge. On the eve of the elections, for example, columnist Dan Ben-Amotz, one of Israel's best leftist humorists, had a tongue-in-cheek piece about how Tel Aviv's prostitutes intended to vote (for Likud, of course).

Last spring, when *Hadashot* was shut down for four days for violating censorship rules, the paper got little support from its competitors (see "Israel's Maverick *Hadashot*," *CJR*, July/August). Despite occasional friction with the authorities, there is still a consensus among most Israeli journalists on the need for military censorship so long as Israel is at war with most of its neighbors. In the

thirty-six years of the Jewish state's existence, there have been only 183 formal complaints by the press against the censors and vice versa; most were solved by compromise, says Military Chief Censor Brigadier General Itzhak Shani, on whose office wall hangs a plaque reading "I never regretted things I didn't say."

Showdowns over censorship have become rather infrequent as the increasingly independent and combative spirit of the Israeli media has forced the censors to become more flexible, even lenient. (In the occupied territories, however, censorship of the Arab press remains harsh.) Fifteen years ago the censors would never have cleared, as they did in 1982, reports that were almost certain to undermine popular support for the war in Lebanon.

Even the "Editors Committee," which in the past met regularly with top government officials and usually complied with their requests not to publish sensitive information (regarding Israel's oil resources, for example), has felt the winds of change. Former Prime Minister Begin almost ignored the group, made up of top editors of the daily Jewish papers and of Israel Radio and Television. But while losing much of their special status as confidants of the government, committee members have gained a greater degree of independence. "Their support can no longer be taken for granted [by the government]," says Shalom Rosenfeld, head of the journalism studies program at Tel Aviv University.

Still, while their press has in general kept Israelis well informed about security matters, critics point to substantial and dangerous gaps. Thus, Professor Shlomo Aronson argues that strict limitations on the open discussion of nuclear weapons, although justified in the past, have become harmful today. "More is known about this subject in Washington, Cairo, and Damascus than in Israel," he says. "From the moment Ariel Sharon as defense minister added insinuations of nuclear threats to his foreign policy it was necessary to open the subject to public debate, but most Israelis know

nothing about it."

But censorship has not seriously inhibited the scrappy Israeli press. Summing up five years of work as the *New York Times* correspondent in Israel, David Shieler told *Ha'aretz* last summer that he had found it impossible to come up with scoops in Israel because the local press is so quick and vital. Israeli journalists themselves, however, are intensely critical of their own performance. Why, they ask, didn't we plant a journalist among West Bank settlers to uncover members of the Jewish terrorist group? In coverage of the Arab world, don't we rely too heavily on information provided by Israeli intelligence sources? Why didn't we find out years ago about Menachem Begin's history of depression? Do we know enough about the history of Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir, whose years of work for Israeli intelligence are still shrouded in mystery? Occasionally journalists here even criticize their own anti-Likud slant. "I don't think that Shamir was as pathetic as he came across from the campaign coverage," says Nahum Barnea, editor of the sophisticated liberal newsmagazine *Koteret Rashit*, "and I am not one of his admirers."

An issue that consumes many Israeli journalists these days is that of Rabbi Meir Kahane, the anti-Arab racist who won a seat in Israel's Knesset last summer. His militant followers are so hungry for publicity that they decided recently to wage their battle from the Journalists Association building in Tel Aviv, where they held a violent demonstration calling on the government to expel all Arabs from Israel. In an article about Kahane, *Koteret Rashit* suggested "killing him softly" by limiting the coverage of his public-relations-oriented actions. "Kahane might turn out to be no more than a boil," *Koteret Rashit* observed. "If nobody scratches it, it might dry up and peel off by itself. The role of the press is not to scratch this sore; in other words: show restraint." Many journalists agree, at least in principle. They note sadly that, as extremism grows, among Israelis as well as among Israel's enemies, the press may have to somewhat limit its own freedom. But in the same breath they often say they are not sure they could ever bring themselves to accept such limits. ■

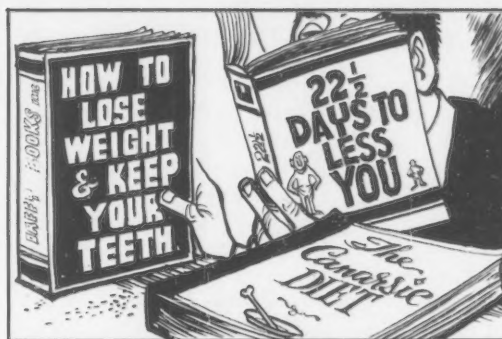
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well-balanced
diet is a key
to good
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**what about
the millions of
food-faddists,
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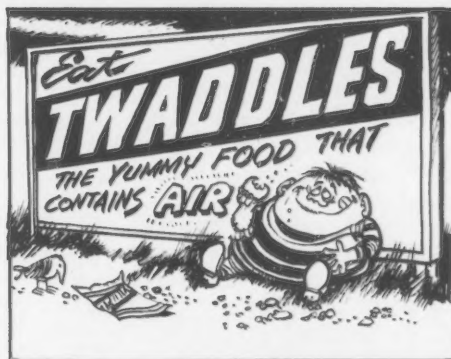
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An entry must be an issue in which 50 percent or more of the editorial content is devoted to a clearly labelled single topic, underscored by a related cover, a separate section on the contents page, and an editorial frontispiece or similar indication of its character.

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Entries, of not more than four articles, are judged by how well they provide the reader with personal guidance or practical assistance in dealing with daily life.

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Entries must consist of four examples, which may be single pictures—including photographic covers—or series of related photographs, including picture essays and articles that combine pictures and text.

Now that you've set your sights on an elephant, find out how to bring one home. The deadline for entries is January 15, 1985. Contact Robert E. Kenyon, Jr., the American Society of Magazine Editors, 575 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. (212) 752-0055. Make this an elephant hunt you'll never forget.

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BOOKS

Muckraking for millions

60 Minutes: The Power and the Politics of America's Most Popular TV News Show

by Axel Madsen

Dodd, Mead & Company 255 pp., \$16.95

According to self-styled investigative reporter Axel Madsen, *60 Minutes*, the weekly CBS newsmagazine, is "fearlessly provocative and controversial," "the most informative, most entertaining prime time information show on the air," "reality retold and reshaped with punch, glamour and excitement," an irresistible mix of "tough stories and pithy profiles," "scorching exposé[s]," and "stylishly crafted pieces." Weekly, the correspondents of *60 Minutes*, variously described here as "angels" and "tigers," train their "stark, probing spotlight" on America, creating "riveting television of the kind that comes with success."

I'm glad Madsen told me he was an investigative reporter. Somehow, I thought he was a flack.

Paul Attanasio is the movie critic of *The Washington Post*.

Madsen's assertion that *60 Minutes* is the best information show in prime time is typical of the rococo vacuousness of good public relations work — it sounds good but says nothing but that *60 Minutes* is better than its clones, *20/20* and whatever NBC is calling Lloyd Dobyns the host of these days. Outside of prime time, *Nightline*, *This Week with David Brinkley*, *The CBS Evening News*, and (within its small verge) *Entertainment Tonight* are all newsier and more fun. What *60 Minutes* is is big business. As Madsen points out, the show generates profits in the neighborhood of \$60 million a year, more than half the total profits of the entire CBS Broadcast Group. And it's a business, he notes, that was made possible by regulatory intervention: in 1970, the FCC had established the prime-time access rule which excluded network programming from 7:30 to 8 P.M.; by later creating an exception to this rule to encourage public affairs programming on Sunday, the agency made *60 Minutes* viable. So life is fat for the show's correspondents and its executive producer, Don Hewitt. While I have nothing against fellow journalists making hay while the sun shines and putting down roots someplace nice, their situation does lead to a bizarre conundrum: what is a government-made

millionaire doing raking the muck?

Madsen has subtitled his book "The Power and the Politics of America's Most Popular TV News Show," but he includes little analysis of the show's putative power and none of its politics. Instead, there are puffy profiles of the principals (with none of the arch gossip that made Barbara Matusow's *The Evening Stars* such a page-turner), some re-fried TV history, and an endless skein of précis of old *60 Minutes* broadcasts — it's sort of like being trapped in the morgue of *TV Guide*. Madsen goes on to give a perfunctory nod toward the kinds of ethical problems for journalists that *60 Minutes* has brought to national consciousness — "checkbook journalism," journalistic entrapment, and manipulative camera and editing techniques — but his solutions exalt the banal: a program "must lay out the facts and examine the pros and cons, if the hanging is not to be a lynching," he says. Those who think this is an important distinction should ask the victim.

My morality may be somewhat lax, but checkbook journalism doesn't really bother me. After all, it's hard to see why sources who talk for money are any less reliable than sources who talk for power or for a cause, which pretty much rounds up the reasons anyone would talk to a reporter. Similarly with entrapment — journalists rarely do anything the cops don't, and concerns about the government, with its monopoly of force, run a lot deeper. The solution, in both cases, is simply for journalists to come clean



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as to how they got their stories, and let the audience judge the credibility of their reports.

Manipulative camera and editing techniques, on the other hand, are another matter. The incriminating cutaway and tight closeup, pioneered by *60 Minutes* and raised to the level of an art form in *CBS Reports*'s Westmoreland documentary, would make St. Francis look like a bookie. Of course, all journalism is a matter of editing, a matter of choosing among facts, and choosing to emphasize this one or that; more centrally, our very process of perception shapes and edits as well — in John Dewey's formulation, reality is not "given" but "taken." We choose what to believe. But in the case of the national media we can balance one account against another — *The New York Times* against *The Washington Post* against Alexander Cockburn in *The Nation*. And with our local media we can measure a small-town paper against not only other local outlets but also the scuttlebutt we hear at cocktail parties, PTA meetings, and the supermarket checkout line.

The problem with *60 Minutes* is that it combines vast resources and national access with an insistent small-town focus — its version of events could be totally fantastic but, unless we lived within the scope of the story, we'd have nothing to check it against. This posture isn't just the key to the program's unique ethical situation — it also helps explain why *60 Minutes*, despite its vast audience (it is regularly first in the ratings), has little power at all. In the first (and best) chapter in his book, Madsen goes behind the scenes of a *60 Minutes* story about a town that, for lack of payment, cut off the water supply to a family with a severely retarded daughter, thus jeopardizing her life. The story resulted in a welter of hate mail for the mayor, and, indirectly, in a \$60,000 settlement for the girl's family after her death. The anecdote illustrates why Madsen, after trumpeting the program's power in his subtitle, finds little to examine; the kinds of impact *60 Minutes* can have — telephoned death threats for the bad guys, mailed lagniappes for the good, small-town indictments, and the like — occur in a random, hit-and-run way. Allied

Chemical Corporation's executives are indicted, but the EPA doesn't change. Lenell Geter goes free, and three cheers for that, but the system stays the same.

And power and politics are inextricably intertwined — *60 Minutes* has no power because, as Madsen tacitly acknowledges by never discussing it, the program has no politics. The work of the classical muckrakers resonated within a larger context — the flip side of their investigative critique was a vision of America that could broadly be called socialism. But the only context for *60 Minutes* is the war for ratings. This not only leaves *60 Minutes* powerless, but it makes for bad television as well. The essence of good television (the sitcom, for example) is the way each show refers back to the others: it is less concerned with narrative (which is often tediously formulaic) than with character and mood. But the episodes of *60 Minutes* don't relate to each other

through some overarching political idea. Once you've seen one greasy opportunist, one Medicaid defrauder or tax skimmer or businessman lying to the camera, you've seen them all. The only link comes from the reporters themselves, grinning smugly like four burghers who have cornered the council of elders in some jerkwater town.

Worse, these investigative pieces are the best thing about the show. Mostly, *60 Minutes* is flummery, a mindless confection of the quaint and the luxurious, celebrity profiles (what a grand old lady of the theater that Helen Hayes is!), inconsequential travelogues, and Harry Reasoner's smarmy leering. Its great ratings, which inspire in Madsen a great deal of chin-rubbing, simply testify once again to the deep logic of television: that people will watch what they think everyone else is watching. *60 Minutes* is our *Ed Sullivan Show*. To all of which, Axel Madsen would reply, "People love to criticize a winner." Well, there is that.

news in the balance

Much of what we do in journalism today we do better than ever. But we also do some things that are turning our audience against us. And these we *must* re-examine lest they undermine the whole structure on which our place in society is built; things like our intrusiveness, like leaks that can destroy reputation, like the almost constantly negative tone without a balancing attention to what does go right; things like carelessness with fact and correction. The issue is whether we have enough confidence in our constitutionally privileged place to take on this challenge and respond. There is abundant evidence that if we do not, others will do it for us, not by moving into our newsrooms but by turning away from our newspapers.

—Louis D. Boccardi
Executive Vice President

AP Associated Press

Playing ball with TV

In Its Own Image: How Television Has Transformed Sports

by Benjamin G. Rader
The Free Press. 228 pp. \$15.95

Razzle Dazzle:

The Curious Marriage of Television and Football

by Phil Patton
The Dial Press. 230 pp. \$14.95

by SANDY PADWE

Near the end of a press conference on the day after the Olympic games concluded last August, an Italian journalist asked Juan Antonio Samaranch, the president of the International Olympic Committee, a question about the telecasts of the 1988 summer games in Seoul, South Korea.

Was it true, he asked, that the IOC, the Seoul organizers, and ABC-TV, which had just concluded a very successful two-week run in Los Angeles, were discussing a plan for 1988 in which many final events would be held at 9

A.M. in Seoul in order to capture the prime-time audience in the United States? And if so, the Italian journalist went on, what about the inconvenience to the athletes who would be running, jumping, swimming, and diving for gold medals at unfamiliar hours, hours which would radically alter many long-standing training regimens, not to mention traditional Olympic-games schedules?

Samaranch had some trouble with his translating set, so Peter Ueberroth, the president of the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, smiled, took a microphone, and said to Samaranch, "The question is whether the IOC is afraid of television."

The IOC president smiled back at Ueberroth and the journalist and assured the gentleman from Italy there was no reason for concern. The athletes' needs are paramount, he said.

But a few days later, Barry Frank of Trans World International, the group representing the Seoul organizers in their dealings with the American networks, confirmed the Italian journalist's fears. There was no question, Frank said, that early starts in many finals in Seoul would be needed to compensate for a thirteen-

Sandy Padwe is deputy sports editor of The New York Times.

BOOKS

hour time difference if the IOC and the organizers expected top American dollar for the 1988 summer games.

Bit by bit, year by year, in dozens of different ways, television has been altering every major sporting event it touches, the Olympics included. Schedule changes and inconvenience to athletes are only part of the fallout of television's march through sports. The list of issues is endless: added time-outs called by television, which actually affect the ebb and flow of play and lead to longer games; the introduction of contrived-for-TV athletic contests such as battles-of-the-network-stars; the subtle encouragement of rules adjustments that make television viewing more exciting but that often impose changes on significant aspects of a sport.

Each of these issues alone may seem trivial to the network officials sitting in their Sixth Avenue suites in Manhattan, but taken in sum they add up to a sociological and cultural revolution in sports. It is a revolution that these two books address quite well.

In Its Own Image, by Benjamin G.

Rader, does an excellent job of tracing the historical takeover of sports by TV, but the book is surprisingly naive when it comes to assessing the state of sports in the pre-television era. Rader, who teaches history at the University of Nebraska, makes it sound like some sort of Camelot when he writes, for example, that in the old days there was more fair play and less striving to win at all costs. Television can be blamed for a lot of the negative things in sports today, but it certainly didn't lower morals or ideals, or teach owners and athletes anything new about greed.

Rader has, however, an interesting, if arguable, explanation for the slow death of the American sports hero, a figure he feels is essential to society's health. "As athletes assumed multi-media roles," he writes, "the lines between the sports hero and the celebrity tended to vanish. Reducing the performances of athletes to a tiny screen somehow made their feats less noteworthy. . . ."

Clearly, the author has a yearning for the good old days alongside the Philco with Bill Stern offering stimulating im-

ages of distant stadia and colorful characters who passed for heroes before a few enlightened editors began to allow some real journalism into their sports sections — a move that led to a partial deflation of the hero balloon and gave readers a look at issues seldom raised in the so-called golden era of sports.

Phil Patton's approach to both sports history and sociology, on the other hand, is somewhat sharper. His analysis of such technological strides as instant replay and diagramming plays on the screen — and how those innovations have captivated viewers — admirably illuminates his subject.

Patton, a free-lance writer based in Brooklyn, captures what is happening, not only in football and television, but in all of sports and in all of television, when he quotes Roone Arledge, the president of ABC News and Sports and a pioneer in the wedding of sports and TV: "We are not creating something phony. It is an illusion, but an illusion of reality."

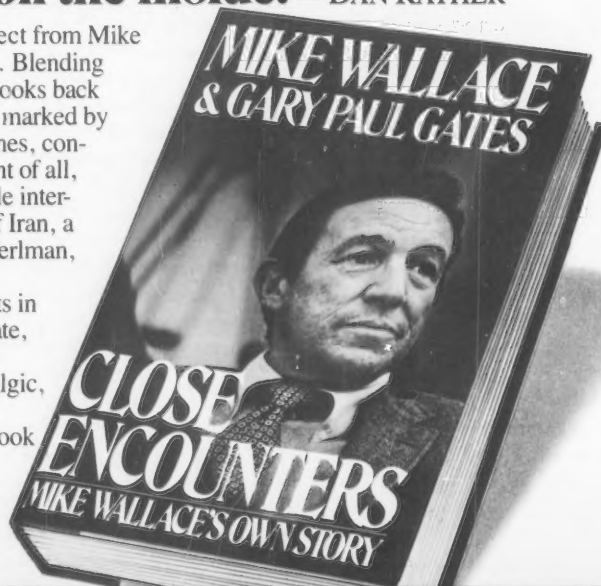
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From Presidential campaigns to conflicts in the Middle East, from Vietnam to Watergate, *CLOSE ENCOUNTERS* is "vintage volatile Wallace . . . much like having a long, nostalgic, anecdotal dinner with him. Mike Wallace is at once arresting and compelling. The book works." —Fred W. Friendly, *Vanity Fair*

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Patton understands football, its rhythms, and its susceptibility to the kinds of changes television has wrought. He also understands the owners, the advertisers, and the corporate and league officials who bring football and other games to the American public. Are the scores too low? Too high? Too much running? Too much passing? Too few fights? Too many fights? There is a simple solution. Change the rules. Change the illusion of reality.

Once again, an ABC executive cuts through all the theories like Walter Payton hitting open field. Patton quotes Julius Barnathan, a close associate of Arledge: "We can all sit here and say we are purists, but when an organization pays five times the gate receipts for television rights, yes, they are trying to make it a more attractive game."

If anyone wants to know how these two institutions — television and sports — arrived at where they are today, these volumes are perceptive guides.

Obstructing the view

Double Vision: How the Press Distorts America's View of the Middle East

by Ze'ev Chafets

William Morrow, 349 pp. \$16.95

by MICHAEL A. LEDEEN

This book is dynamite, and it will be interesting to see if the explosion it is timed to set off actually occurs. For the central thesis of Ze'ev Chafets — an American Jew who moved to Israel at the time of the 1967 Six Day War and eventually became the director of the Israeli Government Press Office — is that many of the leading correspondents, editors, and producers in the elite American media have systematically and knowingly distorted the truth about the Middle East, and systematically and knowingly covered up their own distortions. To be sure, Chafets is an admirer

Michael A. Ledeen is Senior Fellow in International Affairs at the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies. Formerly Rome correspondent for The New Republic, he also served as special adviser to the Secretary of State, 1981-1982.

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of our press freedoms, and goes out of his way to praise our journalists stationed in the Middle East ("honest men and women who are faced with a difficult, often dangerous job. Their basic integrity makes this book both possible and, I hope, worthwhile"), but his indictment is a powerful one. Some of his criticisms have been heard before (which does nothing to lessen their validity): the lack of historical and cultural understanding of the region by our correspondents, and, above all, the shocking lack of adequate linguistic skills. Very few of our correspondents speak the basic languages of the Middle East — Arabic, Persian, and Hebrew — and fewer still are familiar with the traditions and events that shape the political cultures there.

In addition to these well-known shortcomings (which afflict our diplomats as well as our journalists), Chafets argues, reporting on the Middle East has been seriously distorted by other, lesser-known factors:

□ Correspondents in Iran and Arab countries are constantly threatened with

violence and death if they write stories that the local governments do not like.

□ The most aggressive such government is Syria, and its tactics have often succeeded in silencing American news media. Several correspondents have been killed after writing stories that displeased the Syrian government, and others have hastily left the country (and sometimes the region) after receiving threats.

□ Much of the success of the PLO in acquiring a better image in the U.S. media stems from its ability and willingness to intimidate and murder correspondents if they step outside the political parameters that the PLO establishes; yet since the Syrians are even worse, the PLO gains by comparison, and even passes for a moderate and "protective" organization vis-a-vis the media.

□ In addition to this intimidation and terror, all the Arab countries maintain very strict internal censorship and often make it impossible for American journalists to cover important stories. The virtual destruction of the Syrian city of Hama in 1982, along with the systematic massacre of between 10,000 and 30,000 in-

habitants, was not reported for months and then received only cursory coverage. Indeed, virtually the only complaints against censorship in the Middle East are directed against Israel, which is by far the most open society in the region. The same pattern was seen in 1982-1983 when the Israeli invasion of Lebanon received saturation coverage and all acts of Israeli violence were carefully scrutinized. Yet subsequent massacres by Druses, Palestinians, and Syrians received far less coverage and were sometimes ignored entirely.

These are serious charges, they are documented in detail, and Chafets names names. One of those named is foreign editor Jim Hoagland of *The Washington Post*, who is singled out for particular criticism. Hoagland and the *Post* are accused of having deliberately stonewalled a major story out of Lebanon in May 1981. Five American journalists stationed in Beirut were arrested by a radical PLO faction, interrogated and intimidated for fifteen hours, and then released. The five agreed



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The other massacre in the Middle East: Deliberately shielded from outside observers, the destruction of Hama, Syria's third largest city, by the army of president Hafez al-Assad, in February 1982, got scant attention from the U.S. news media; NBC's report on the "outbreak of violence," for example, was accompanied by footage of a Damascus bazaar. The exclusive photograph below was taken in March by French photojournalist Michel Folco, who, disguised as a tourist, was driven through the streets of the closed city by a terrified chauffeur. Above, the city as it used to be.



not to publish anything about the event, but when Chafets gave a long interview to *New York Times* correspondent David Shipler in Israel in which he complained about the silence, the story came out in most American news media. It appeared first in the *International Herald Tribune* (only later in *The New York Times*, which deleted a potentially damaging reference to the *Times* itself, and only "corrected" the story later on), then in other newspapers and on the wires — but not in the *Post*. Much later, Chafets notes, Hoagland wrote in the *Post* that the paper had done nothing wrong, and went on to defend the PLO from charges of intimidation of journalists. Hoagland

also wrote that Chafets had identified his source for the Lebanon incident as *New York Times* journalist William Farrell, who was still stationed in the Middle East. Chafets insists he had not identified the source, and suggests that Hoagland's statement put the journalist in danger. Chafets does not point out that such a statement would have had the additional effect of drastically limiting candid exchanges between Chafets and American journalists; in the Middle East, where newspaper people are killed for talking loosely, anyone who believed Hoagland would consider Chafets a dangerous person.

Although Chafets zeroes in on Hoag-

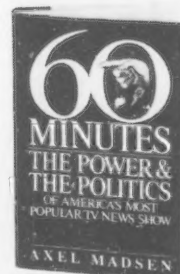
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land in this particular instance, he generally ignores the importance of editors, preferring to direct his attention to correspondents, with whom he has had greater contact. Yet the role of editors is crucial, for they could and should be able to save younger correspondents from some of their more egregious errors. To take just one example, senior editors should have known immediately that the inflated casualty figures coming out of Lebanon in the first weeks of the Israeli invasion were impossible, and they should have forced their correspondents to double-check them. This might have put the actual level of violence in a more accurate perspective, and also might have indicated to the American public that the PLO was putting out inaccurate information during the fighting.

It's also unfortunate that this excellent book is limited to Middle East affairs, for many of the problems Chafets identifies are general ones. Intimidation and isolation of journalists are widely used techniques, far more common than most Americans believe. A friend of

mine in Italy, for instance, wrote the first in a projected series of articles on the Mafia, but after the first one was published in the *International Herald Tribune*, my friend received a phone call. The caller praised the article for its accuracy and objectivity, and then said, "I think it would be best for all of us if nothing more were published," and no further articles were written. Direct threats against journalists and publishers are commonplace from Africa to Latin America. In the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if there is a story that the authorities don't want covered, they can — and do — either expel the journalists or cut the wires (this was foiled during the December 1981 crackdown in Poland only because the American government provided communications service to the American media). And if a particular journalist offends them, that journalist can be physically assaulted or subjected to a disinformation attack that can threaten his or her livelihood. To take my own case, after writing a number of articles critical of the Italian Communist Party, I found myself accused of

being a CIA agent in both Italian and American publications, a false charge that continues to be made to this day.

This helps to explain why the truth about some of these countries is so hard to find, just as it helps to explain why we didn't find out about the PLO's murderous state-within-a-state in Lebanon until after its military power was broken by the Israeli invasion in 1982. Americans need to know about the obstacles to gathering and reporting the news in many countries; they are ill-served by media which regularly point out to readers and viewers whenever a story has been passed by the Israeli military censor, while saying nothing about the far more thorough and restrictive censorship applied by Syrians, Jordanians, Saudis, Libyans, Egyptians, and Palestinians, even though an office of censorship may not formally exist. For opening a window on this little-known but very important aspect of international journalism, as well as for examining the strengths and weaknesses of American coverage of the Middle East, we should all be grateful to Mr. Chafets. ■

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He made his union's hit list.

Horace Guyton lived an ordinary life until one day in May 1983. That's the day he crossed a union picket line, and the day the safe, comfortable life he'd built for his wife and three children began to crumble around him.

Horace worked as a janitor at the Wheaton Industries plant in Millville, New Jersey. He was a member of Local 219 of the Glass, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers' union. But his belief in his union's leadership was challenged when officials ordered a strike without first allowing the rank-and-file to vote on it.

That bothered Horace and several other workers. So much so that they decided they could not support a strike not authorized or approved by the rank-and-file workers. But when Horace and the other employees returned to work, they were not prepared for how far Local 219 militants would go to enforce their strike order.

And the life for which Horace had worked so hard came tumbling down. First came the name-calling . . . "Scab!" . . . "Nigger!" . . . Then the mental torment . . . his house was watched . . . his wife was followed and photographed.

Then the physical threats . . . a striker brandishing a stick threatened to "get" Horace . . . a man in a car pointed a shotgun at him, yelling "Bam! You're a dead scab!" . . . Horace was struck by a brick hurled from a passing truck bearing a union's name.

Finally, a "scab" list was circulated among the strikers and posted in the union hall. It became known as the "Hit List." It listed the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the workers who had returned to work.

The Guyton family was finally forced to move their family home for their own safety. Horace hoped their new location would protect his wife and children. But Local 219 militants found their new home, and updated their Hit List. The harassment and terror continued.

Today, the strike is over but Horace's ordeal is not. He is still greeted by racial slurs. One striker has threatened that the Guyton family is "dead." The constant fear for himself, his wife and his children has taken its toll. Horace has been diagnosed as suffering from a severe post-traumatic stress disorder.

Horace's story should be unique, but it's not. Since 1975, more than 4100 incidents of union violence have been reported in the nation's press. Most of the victims don't have the resources or the know-how to fight back.

But Horace Guyton found a way. He and two co-workers have banded together in a lawsuit against those who orchestrated the campaign of terror against them. Their legal bills are being paid by the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation.

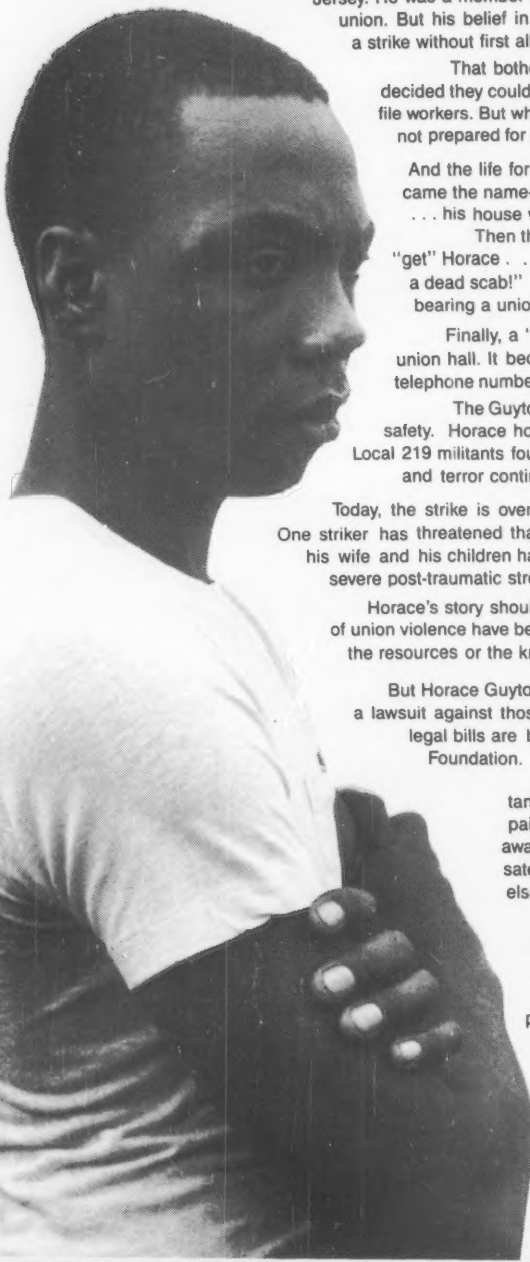
The workers are charging Local 219 officials and some militant members with organizing, conducting and condoning a campaign of harassment and violence. They intend to ask the court to award them in excess of \$400,000 in damages to somehow compensate for their suffering. They hope such an award will deter anyone else from using violence to carry out union officials' demands.

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is doing all it can to help Horace Guyton and other victims of the abuses of forced unionism. It is supporting more than 250 cases involving union violence, illegal spending of forced union fees for politics, academic and political freedom, and other basic workers rights that are violated by compulsory unionism abuses.

Horace didn't start out to be a hero. But he ended up one. If you'd like to help other workers like Horace Guyton and want to know more about the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, please call or write us today.

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The San Francisco story

TO THE REVIEW:

One always expects better, especially from the *Columbia Journalism Review*, the arbiter of what's right and wrong with journalism, and from the "noted historian" it selected to observe the doings of television at the Democratic National Convention ("The Networks vs. the Pols: Who Won at San Francisco?" *CJR*, September/October). Consequently, I offer the following by way of necessary clarification.

Sad to say, Garry Wills has quoted me both incompletely and out of context. I did indeed refer in 1980 and subsequently to a portion of the political process as a "dinosaur" — more precisely as a "dying dinosaur." The reference was, however, not to political conventions alone but to the combination of conventions as they *have become*, plus the automatic wall-to-wall television coverage of those conventions.

The fact is that, with the rise of the primary and caucus system over the last dozen years, conventions ceased to be events that selected, but rather events that ratified, candidate choices made across the months preceding the conventions. That being the case, conventions became more show than business, and therefore the so-called historic coverage they had received had to change.

What began in 1980 and continued in 1984 is, in my view, a very healthy evolution on the part of the national political parties and the television networks as they view a new reality and attempt to come to grips with it. Evolution, it must be remembered, is a healthy process because it would be bad, in the extreme, if what happened to the dinosaur in the absence of evolution happened to the quadrennial political conventions and the coverage they are afforded.

JEFF GRALNICK
Vice-president,
executive producer,
political broadcasts
ABC News
New York, N.Y.

TO THE REVIEW:

I noted, with interest, Garry Wills's criticism of my report on the Lance-Manatt episode at the Democratic National Convention.

Specifically, he accuses our *MacNeill/Lehrer NewsHour* of introducing an interview with Congressman Tony Coelho "with an entirely misleading chronology of events." The essence is that we allegedly said the negotiations over the Bert Lance controversy started on the Sunday before the convention, while Mr. Wills maintains that they began two days before.

Apparently, neither Mr. Wills nor his research assistants viewed our entire report. Actually, we reported that the controversy began Thursday, became officially public on Saturday, and that the final "marathon set of negotiations" between the Mondale campaign, Lance, party chairman Manatt, and Coelho started early Sunday morning in the California congressman's hotel suite. All of the above is accurate, as Wills could have easily discovered with a call to Representative Coelho or any of the other participants.

No doubt, more details on earlier negotiations could have been provided. But there simply was not room in a four-minute piece for every item of detail, and I believe our report captured the essence of the episode.

JUDY WOODRUFF
Chief Washington correspondent
The MacNeill/Lehrer NewsHour
Arlington, Va.

TO THE REVIEW:

While there are many hostesses who will not invite me to dinner — especially a second time — Garry Wills erred in quoting Sander Vanocur as saying that I was "not invited" to stay for dinner at Ann Getty's party for Charles Manatt.

Let the record show that Mrs. Getty most graciously *did* invite me for dinner. Unfortunately, I had a previous, long-standing commitment to play guitar with a group of

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San Francisco bluegrass musicians and could only stay for cocktails. That is why I was quietly slipping out the door when Mr. Manatt told me he had been fired and replaced by Bert Lance.

Upon arrival at the bluegrass performance, I immediately phoned the story to *Nightline*, and only then tuned my guitar. That is how ABC News had the story on the air before Mr. Manatt told others at the Getty dinner. (There was no debate over whether a reporter would "pretermite the meal for the story," as Mr. Wills alleges.)

HAL BRUNO
Political director
ABC News
Washington, D.C.

The Farrakhan invitation

TO THE REVIEW:

Permit me to comment on Theodore H. White's letter of resignation from the National Press Club (Other Voices, CJR, September/October). In 1933, then president-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt came to the National Press Club ballroom to have lunch, give a speech, and answer questions from club members and their guests. Since then, the NPC has been host to presidents, prime

ministers, kings, queens, dissidents, defectors, corporate chiefs, union leaders, scientists, sports figures, liberals, conservatives, communists, socialists, whites, blacks, and browns.

We continued that program with the appearance of Louis Farrakhan, head of the Nation of Islam, on July 30. Farrakhan had stirred controversy during the presidential primaries with comments about Adolf Hitler, American Jews, and *Washington Post* reporter Milton Coleman. His comments had received enormous attention from the nation's newspapers, television and radio networks, and magazines. (*The New York Times*, for example, had 118 stories that focused on Farrakhan or referred to him from January 1 to August 3 of this year.) Mr. Farrakhan complained that his comments about Jews, Coleman, and Hitler had been either misquoted, taken out of context, or both.

So for an hour at the NPC Farrakhan painted a portrait of himself in a speech and question-and-answer session that was identical to that painted by the media. After his appearance at the NPC, Mr. Farrakhan has no claim to misrepresentation of his message by the media or anyone else.

The NPC could have boycotted Mr. Far-

rakhan, but I think it would be a serious mistake for the club or the country to pretend that Mr. Farrakhan, his views, and his supporters do not exist. I am proud to be president of an organization whose members and officers have the courage not to turn away from controversy.

The National Press Club should not be made the whipping boy for the *Post*, the *Times*, and others in the media who played the Farrakhan story to the hilt and now apparently regret it.

JOHN FOGARTY
President
National Press Club
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Salant throws a dart

TO THE REVIEW:

If *The New York Times* had Abe Rosenthal review Harrison Salisbury's *Without Fear or Favor: An Uncompromising Look at The New York Times*; if Bill Paley reviewed his autobiography, *As It Happened*, on CBS's *Sunday Morning* news show; if Ben Bradlee assigned himself to review Tom Kelley's *The Imperial Post* for *The Washington Post*, or Kay Graham to review Dave Halberstam's

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The Powers That Be, you'd give a nice, big, fat, juicy Dart to the *Times*, CBS, and the *Post*, right?

So how about at least a medium-sized dart to CJR and managing editor Gloria Cooper (who, I take it, is in charge of awarding Darts and Laurels) for having Ms. Cooper review *Public Opinion's* "The Media" — a review which included sharp criticism of the section which laid into CJR?

RICHARD SALANT
New Canaan, Conn.

The editors reply: *Briefings*, the department in which the item appeared that Mr. Salant takes exception to, is a regular feature in the Review. The mandate of its author is to single out, summarize, and comment on a wide variety of reports, articles, and books that may be of interest to our readers. When Gloria Cooper decided to include an item on a cluster of articles about the news media which had been published by *Public Opinion*, we saw no reason to bring in an "outside" writer simply because one of those articles dealt with the Review. (There was no attempt to conceal Cooper's connection with this magazine: the department carries her byline.) The Review will, as a matter of course,

be pleased to publish a letter from Mr. Salant, or anyone else, who found Cooper's comments about the article in question inaccurate or unfair.

The Cuban connection

TO THE REVIEW:

John Rothchild's "The Cuban Connection and the Gringo Press" (CJR, September/October) is a perceptive description of the interplay between the right-wing and mainstream press in Miami. However, the article underestimates the chilling effect that media-led intimidation has in this area. The reason why violent incidents are infrequent is that many people, particularly Cubans who dissent from the dominant view, have been silenced by the fear of persecution, which ranges from vilification to death; I speak from personal experience. Conversely, this very intimidation makes Cuban opinion here seem, even to a trained outside observer, more monolithic than it actually is.

Rothchild's statement that the Cuban stations' right-wing zeal "continue[s] to alienate gringos from Hispanics in Miami" is misleading. The widespread antagonism

toward Hispanics here has little to do with any revulsion against anticommunist agitation. Its source is cultural chauvinism. Its boldest expression was a successful and viciously ethnocentric campaign to repeal Dade County's bilingual ordinance. The vast majority of non-Latins voted to end official bilingualism in a clear expression of xenophobia totally inconsistent with civil libertarian sentiments.

Finally, the repeated use of the word "gringo" was gratuitous and irritating. Miami has many problems; anti-"gringo" prejudice is not one of them.

MAX CASTRO
Coral Gables, Fla.

Pretrial publicity

TO THE REVIEW:

Don R. Pember's defense of prejudicial pretrial publicity (At Issue, CJR, September/October) relies on two arguments. One is that the question of whether prejudicial publicity influences jury verdicts is still open. Pember considers the research data inconclusive (although some will disagree), but suggests, in effect, that we disregard the possibility of

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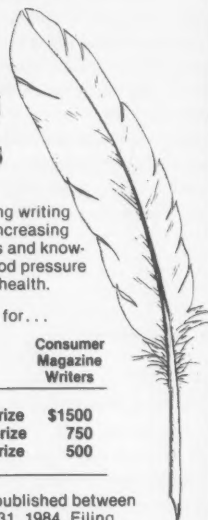
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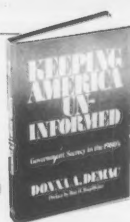
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influence. The other argument is that even if
some potential jurors are subject to influence
by what they read or hear, there are accept-
able remedies (change of venue or excusing
jurors).

However, there are some questions that
Pember doesn't ask, but should. So should
all journalists.

The first is whether publishing prejudicial
information, such as a confession or prior
conviction record, is really essential to the
story. Will the walls of the republic crumble
if that type of potentially damaging infor-
mation is withheld until trial?

The second, and perhaps more important,
question is whether the option of excusing
jurors who admit to having prior knowledge
of the case is really a desirable solution. The
sensational criminal case in which the press
is prone to overstep good judgment is thus
tried before jurors who haven't been exposed
to the coverage.

Taken to the extreme — and it sometimes
is — that may mean using jurors who haven't
been exposed to news, period. Those who
are heavy news consumers — generally peo-
ple with higher education levels — will be
excluded from jury service. Those who are
infrequent news consumers — generally
those with lower educational attainment —
are by default the jurors of choice.

Is that what we want for our justice sys-
tem?

ARNOLD H. ISMACH
Associate professor
School of Journalism and
Mass Communication
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minn.

The ethnicity problem

TO THE REVIEW:

In "Black Reporters, White Press — and the
Jackson Campaign" (CJR, July/August), Les
Payne attacks a "loyalty oath" for black re-
porters: "Are you a reporter who happens to
be black or a black who happens to be a
reporter?"

Though probably for different reasons, I
agree with Payne that the question is offen-
sive. It questions, a priori, a reporter's ob-
jectivity and therefore demeans his or her
integrity. Even when an editor is justified in
questioning a reporter's objectivity because
of actual imbalances in the reporter's work,
the loyalty question is still inappropriate.
Why? Because it's confrontational, and con-
frontation often only encourages both parties
to stubbornly defend their positions.

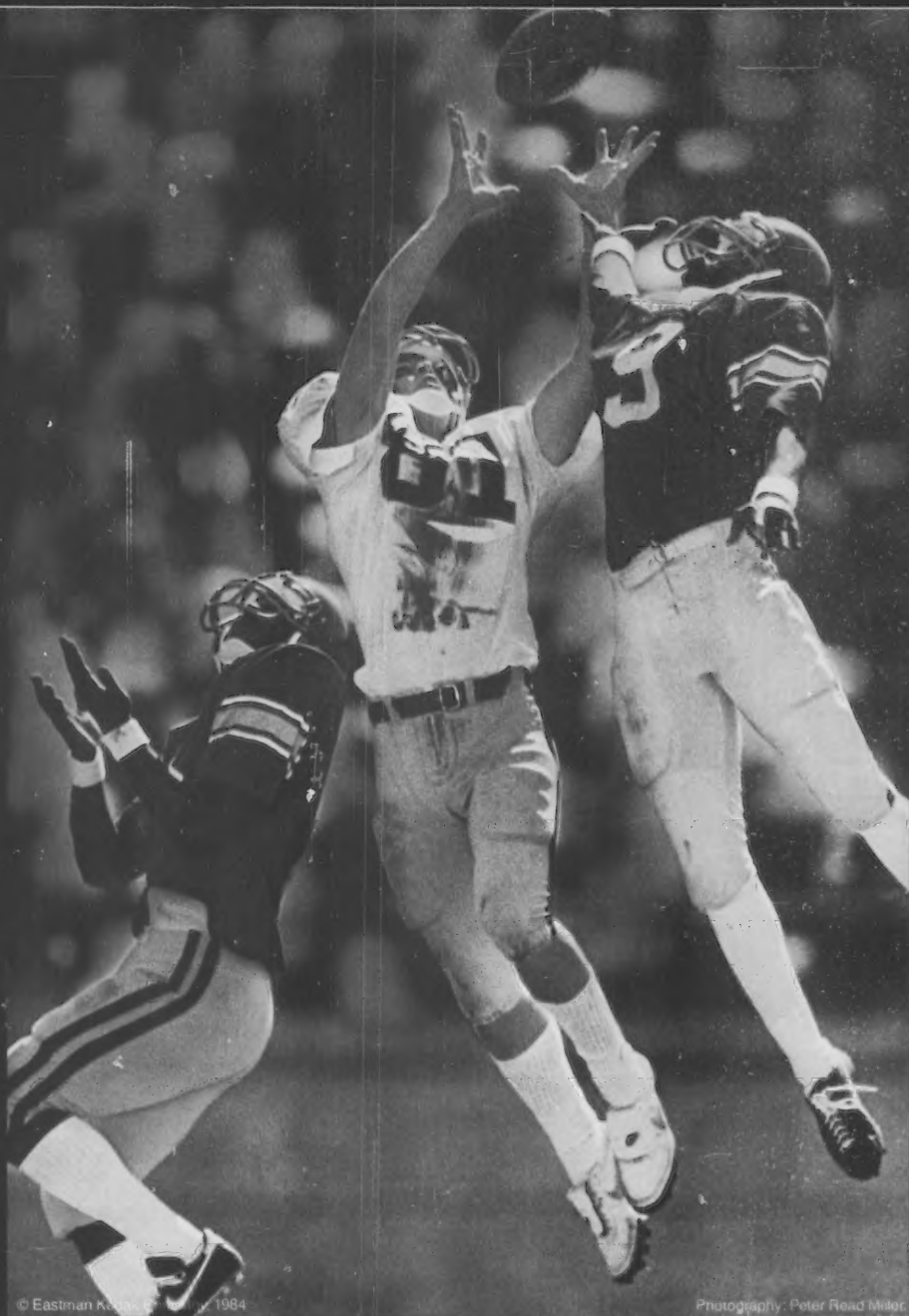
Again, perhaps for different reasons, I also
agree with Payne that the loyalty question is

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unanswerable. Your ethnicity is an immutable part of your identity. It influences how you see the world. Your ethnicity cannot be separated from your reporting. However, you can still be objective in covering issues concerning your ethnic group.

Reporters should not, however, indulge their ethnicity and let it affect their objectivity when reporting on ethnic kinsfolk—a position apparently held by those black journalists whom Payne quotes as saying that they "must be allowed to practice their craft of journalism without denying their historical situation."

This smacks of a violation of straight news reporting, which emphasizes balance, harnessing your controllable biases, and presenting just the facts. These black journalists (perhaps Payne included) seem to be saying that a bit of partisanship stemming from their historical situation is okay.

Well, it's not. Reporters cannot justifiably call themselves professional if they ignore or consciously interpret relevant facts to benefit newsmakers they happen to like.

I hasten to add, however, that reporters can make a conscious attempt to aid the black community without violating journalistic principles. Essentially, this involves making sure that blacks are not unnecessarily portrayed in a negative light, making an attempt to find newsworthy stories about blacks that are positive, and using black experts as newsmakers in non-racial stories. In no instance does this effort tolerate altering information that's reported or suppressing relevant facts because they're embarrassing.

TRACE REGAN

Assistant professor of journalism
Ohio Wesleyan University
Delaware, Ohio

Corrections

In "USSR: How Lenin's Guidelines Shape the News," the name of the chairman of the International Olympic Committee, Juan Antonio Samaranch, was spelled incorrectly (Saramanch), and the date of a *Red Star* photograph was incorrectly given as December 31, 1983. The correct date is December 21.

Deadline

The editors welcome letters from readers. To be considered for publication in the January/February issue, letters should be received by November 20. Letters are subject to editing for clarity and space.

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The Charlotte (N.C.) News 9/13/84

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Scottsdale (Ariz.) Daily Progress 8/28/84

Four county liquor stores sold to teen

The Montgomery Journal (Montgomery County, Md.) 8/8/84

Jelley Moves Into New Roll



New Hampshire Chronicle 8/8/84

CORRECTION

■ The Jumble puzzle, which appeared on page D1 of Thursday's edition, actually was the puzzle scheduled to appear today. The Jumble originally scheduled to appear Thursday as well as the answers to Wednesday's puzzle are on page E1 today. The answers to the puzzle published today appeared Thursday, and the answers to the puzzle published Thursday will appear Saturday.

The Arizona Republic 9/28/84

Deaf-mute gets new hearing in killing

Chicago Tribune 9/5/84

CITY PACTS FIGHT BOILS

Chicago Sun-Times 8/30/84

Bridge Closed by Accident

The New York Times 10/1/84

Jail dogs suspect in Reagan threat

New Haven (Conn.) Register 9/19/84

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